

# HOLLYWOOD CONFESSIONS

*True Stories of Movie Adventure*

**AUGUST**

**25¢**



**A MATTER OF FORM**

## THE JINX ON ROOM 23.

A Hollywood Short Story with a Kick



(Your Initial in two places on every piece)



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- 1 Sauce Boat Tray, 7 1/4 inches
- 1 Butter Plate, 6 inches
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**Hartman Furniture & Carpet Co. Dept. 5533 Chicago, Illinois**

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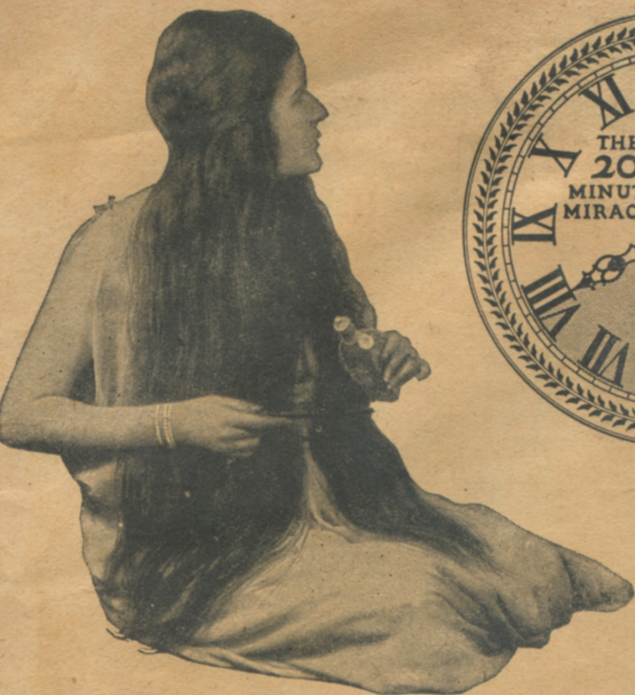
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Print Initial You Want Here





# Marvelous New Spanish Liquid Makes any hair naturally curly in 20 minutes

## The Spanish Beggar's Priceless Gift

by Winnifred Ralston

FROM the day we started to school, Charity Winthrop and I were called the tousled-hair twins. Our hair simply wouldn't behave.

As we grew older the hated name still clung to us. It followed us through the grades and into boarding school. Then Charity's family moved to Spain and I didn't see her again until last New Year's eve.

A party of us had gone to the Drake Hotel for dinner that night. As usual I was terribly embarrassed and ashamed of my hair.

Horribly self-conscious I was sitting at the table, scarcely touching my food, wishing I were home. It seemed that everyone had wonderful, lustrous, curly hair but me and I felt they were all laughing—or worse, pitying me behind my back.

My eyes strayed to the dance floor and there I saw a beautiful girl dancing with Tom Harvey. Her eye caught mine and to my surprise she smiled and started toward me.

About this girl's face was a halo of golden curls. I think she had the most beautiful hair I ever saw. My face must have turned scarlet as I compared it mentally with my own straggly, ugly mop.

Of course you have guessed her identity—Charity Winthrop, who once had dull straight hair like mine.

It had been five long years since I had seen her. But I simply couldn't wait. I blurted out—"Charity Winthrop—tell me—what miracle has happened to your hair?"

She smiled and said mysteriously, "Come to my room and I will tell you the whole story."

### Charity tells of the beggar's gift

"Our house in Madrid faced a little, old plaza where I often strolled after my siesta.

"Miguel, the beggar, always occupied the end bench of the south end of the plaza. I always dropped a few centavos in his hat when I passed and he soon grew to know me.

"The day before I left Madrid I stopped to bid him goodbye and pressed a gold coin in his palm."

"*Hija mia*," he said, "You have been very kind to an old man. *Digamelo* (tell me) *senorita*, what it is your heart most desires."

"I laughed at the idea, then said jokingly, 'Miguel, my hair is straight and dull. I would have it lustrous and curly'."

"*Oigame, senorita*," he said—"Many years ago a Castilian prince was wedded to a Moorish beauty. Her hair was black as a raven's wing and straight as an arrow. Like you, this lady wanted *los pelos rizos* (curly hair). Her husband offered thousands of *pesos* to the man who would fulfill her wish. The prize fell to Pedro, the *droguero*, Out of roots and herbs he brewed a potion that converted the princess' straight, unruly hair into a glorious mass of ringlet curls.

"Pedro, son of the son of Pedro, has that secret today. Years ago I did him a great service. Here you will find him, go to him and tell your wish."

"I called a *coche* and gave the driver the address Miguel had given me.

"At the door of the apothecary shop, a funny old hawk-nosed Spaniard met me. I stammered out my explanation. When I finished, he bowed and vanished into his store. Presently he returned and handed me a bottle.

"Terribly excited—I could hardly wait until I reached home. When I was in my room alone, I took down my hair and applied the liquid as directed. In twenty minutes, not one second more, the transformation, which you have noted, had taken place.

"Come, Winnifred—apply it to your own hair and see what it can do for you."

Twenty minutes later as I looked into Charity's mirror I could hardly believe my eyes. The impossible had happened. My dull, straight hair had wound itself into curling tendrils. My head was a mass of ringlets and waves. It shone with a luster it never had before.

You can imagine the amazement of the others in the party when I returned to the ballroom. Everybody noticed the change. Never did I have such a glorious night. I was popular. Men clustered about me. I had never been so happy. My hair was curly and beautiful.

I asked Charity's permission to take a sample of the Spanish liquid to my cousin at the Century Laboratories. For days he worked, analyzing the liquid. Finally, he solved the problem, isolated the two Spanish herbs, the important ingredients.

They experimented on fifty women and the results were simply astounding. Now the Century Chemists are prepared to supply the wonderful Spanish Curling Liquid to women everywhere.

### Take advantage of their generous trial offer—

I told my cousin I did not want one penny for the information I had given him. I did make one stipulation, however. I insisted that he introduce the discovery by selling it for a limited time at actual laboratory cost plus postage so that as many women as possible could take advantage of it. This he agreed to do.

Don't delay another day. For the Century Chemists guarantee satisfaction or refund your money.

## Free Distribution of \$3.50 Bottles

(ONLY ONE TO A FAMILY)

We are offering for a limited time only, no-profit distribution of the regular \$3.50 size of our Spanish Curling Liquid.

The actual cost of preparing and compounding this Spanish Curling Liquid, including bottling, packing and shipping is \$1.87. We have decided to ship the first bottle to each new user at actual cost price.

You do not have to send one penny in advance. Merely fill out the coupon below—then pay the postman \$1.87 plus the few cents postage, when he delivers the liquid. If you are not satisfied in every way, even this low laboratory fee will be refunded promptly. This opportunity may never appear again. Miss Ralston urges that you take advantage of it at once.



Wavy Bob

### CENTURY CHEMISTS

(Originators of the famous 40 Minute Beauty Clay)  
Century Bldg., Chicago

Send No Money—Simply Sign and Mail Coupon

CENTURY CHEMISTS Dept. 342  
Century Bldg., Chicago

Please send me in plain wrapper, by insured parcel post, a full size \$3.50 bottle of Liquid Marcelle (Spanish Curling Liquid). I will pay postman \$1.87, plus few cents postage, on delivery, with the understanding that if, after a five-day trial, I am not elated with the results from this magic curling fluid, I may return the unused contents in the bottle, and you will immediately return my money in full.

Name .....

Street .....

Town ..... State .....

If apt to be out when postman calls, you may enclose \$2 with coupon, and Liquid Marcelle will be sent you postpaid.



A Matchless Marcel



Lovely Curls



# FORCED TO SELL

## 25000 imported pearl necklaces

### *finest quality*

### at unheard of price

*Don't miss this chance to get one of these exquisite indestructible 24-in. Pearl Necklaces; guaranteed 14k white gold clasp with small genuine diamond. \$5.87 the amazing price for quick clearance!*

The misfortune of a well-known New York jewel importer is your gain. The end of a dull season in the jewelry business found his vaults crowded with gems and so this merchant has asked us to sell 25,000 exquisite, 24-inch necklaces at a price to guarantee immediate clearance.

The pearls are indestructible Spanish gems—they will last a lifetime. Each gleaming strand is 24 inches long, fitted with a beautiful clasp of white gold, studded with a real diamond.

*Yours at less than the price of diamond clasp alone!*

The diamond clasp alone (set in genuine 14k white gold) could not be duplicated through the average retail channels for the price at which we are sacrificing the necklace complete. This will give you some idea of the urgency of this sale and the remarkable value offered you.

*Wear necklace ten days at our risk*

Every necklace sold under this remarkable offer is sold on an unconditional money-back guarantee. Accept your necklace for ten days' trial at our expense and risk. Wear it for street and evening wear for

ten days; go to your jeweler's and compare the necklace with those in his showcase. If you can duplicate your strand for less than \$15 send it back and get your money.

**Send no money  
Just mail the coupon**

Don't delay another moment making up your mind. At the absurdly low price, \$5.87, these beautiful necklaces are going to be snapped up instantly by men and women with an eye for a real bargain.

Send no money; simply sign and mail the coupon. When the postman brings your necklace, deposit the amount of the insurance, \$5.87 plus the few cents postage as your guarantee of good faith. (This small deposit is required to protect us from mere curiosity seekers and requests from children acting without parents' consent. Your payment to the postman is simply a

deposit which will be refunded, every penny, if, after 10 days you decide to return the necklace.)

**Sale for limited time only  
Act Now!**

There are only 25,000 of these necklaces available at this remarkably low price and this advertisement is appearing simultaneously in publications reaching nearly a million women.

Orders will be filled strictly in sequence as received. We want this sale to add thousands of names to our mailing list, therefore no more than three necklaces will be sold to any one buyer. We reserve the right to return your order if supply is exhausted when same is received.

If you do not want to miss this wonderful opportunity, sign and mail the coupon now.

Note—If you expect to be out when the postman calls you may send \$6 with the coupon and your necklace will be sent by insured mail, postpaid.

#### NOTE

Do not doubt the remarkable value of these pearls because of the low price. Every statement has been carefully weighed and we repeat here our unconditional guarantee—money refunded if you are not satisfied. The pearls are genuine imported, indestructible, and guaranteed not to peel or crack; the filigree clasp is of 14k white gold set with small genuine diamond. The velvet box illustrated is not included, pearls being shipped to you in our original package.

#### Send No Money—Just Mail Coupon

**The Frederick Anderson Jewelers, Dept. 344  
710-716 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago**

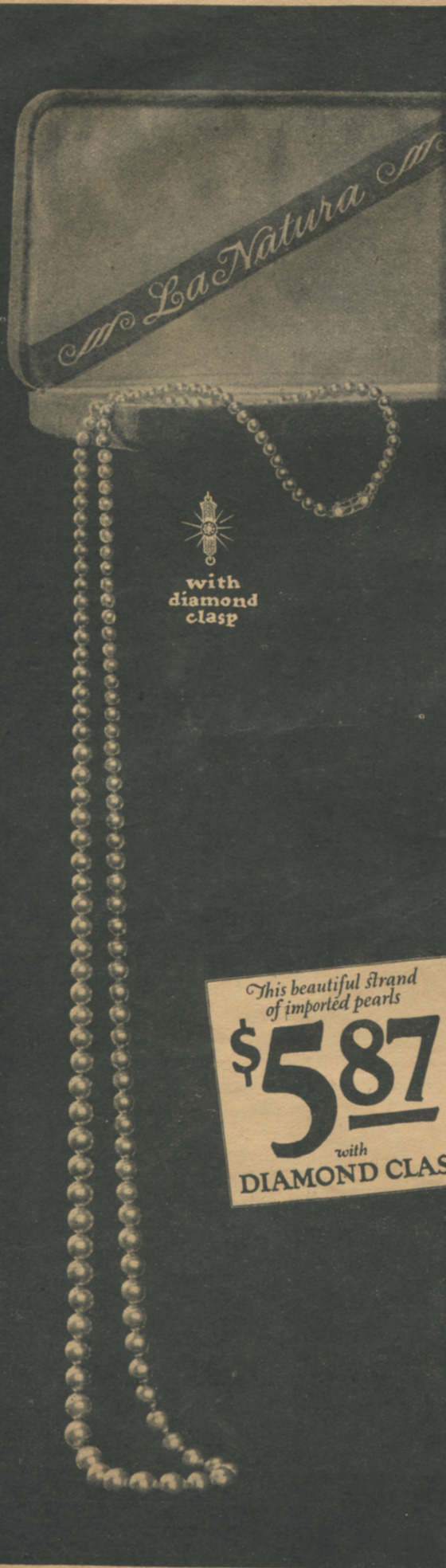
Please send me on 10 DAYS' APPROVAL one of your 24-inch Pearl Necklaces with genuine white gold diamond clasp. I will pay postman \$5.87 (plus few cents postage) on receipt—with understanding that I may return necklace in 10 days, if I desire to do so, and you agree to refund \$5.87 in full.

Name.....

Street.....

Town..... State.....

If apt to be out when postman calls, you may enclose \$6 with coupon, and necklace will be sent postpaid





# HOLLYWOOD CONFESSIONS



ANNE AUSTIN, Managing Editor

ROY D. MacLEAN, Art Director

Vol. II

No. 3

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Mon Randall

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*Telula seemed about to sink into Farney's arms—then with a deep blush she pulled away*



# HONOLULU NIGHTS

IT WAS at a luau in my native village that I first saw Douglas Farney. The great feast was given to honor the Golden Picture Company from Hollywood, the American moving picture colony.

The company had finished their picture, "The Well-Beloved", which is taken from the life of my illustrious ancestor King Lunalile. The whole village had turned out to feast and dance with Farney, who had so royally taken the role of this beloved king famed in song and story.

I had arrived unexpectedly, from a six months' stay in London where I had been hurriedly called to settle the estate of the late Cecil Lord. His wife was my aunt, Princess Kapiolani, who died at the birth of their daughter Telula.

I heard music and the sound of many happy voices. Upon the vine covered lanai a feast fit for the ancient kings of Hawaii was spread surrounded by a strangely fantastic group. The entire company being dressed in the costumes of the olden days of Hawaii.

At the head of the sumptuous feast, with the feather helmet on his curly head, and the royal feather mantle around his broad shoulders, was Douglas Farney as King Lunalile the Well-Beloved, and by his side Telula, fair as the morning mist that drapes the Pali's stately brow.

The music of the ukuleles rose and throbbed in the sweet scented air as rose-crowned dancers swayed to the entrancing melody. Ah, the poetry of the Hawaiian hula! The dance is the breath of our life, for without it we fade and die away.

It was a tropical moonlight night. Such a night as is only possible in my beloved Hawaii. A night filled with dancing and song, and rippling laughter.

As I peered from the heavy shadows of the vines, the glare of the flaming torches became dimmer, and the company prepared to say "Aloha." Telula, when she was asked to dance, shook her head and said that it was too late, but, at their insistent demand that she dance as she had in the picture, she glided into the dimming light.

Telula, dainty and lovely as a jasmine flower, made several languid passes with her beautiful slim hands and Douglas Farney bounded to her side, his eyes shining with a mad wild light.

## Telula Dances the Hula

FARNEY danced with the ease and grace of the native born. Telula seemed a sprite, a nymph, as her dainty feet scarcely touched the floor. Never have I seen the hula danced with greater grace or abandon than it was by those two.

Throwing a lei of sweet flowers about his neck, Telula seemed for a moment about to sink into Farney's outstretched arms, but only for a moment, for with a deep blush she pulled away from him.

The shrill voices of the Americans, bidding the natives "Aloha," came to my listening ear. All had left except Farney. Telula seemed to be pleading with him, as her childish fingers toyed nervously with a long chain that hung about her slender shoulders.

The ardent light of desire died out of his blue eyes, his handsome pale face hardened, repulsing her entreaties, his lips curling in disdain, I heard him cry:

"It's a lie—a lie! A confounded frame-up. I marry

*"Oh, for something worse than death—worse than death—" was the cry for vengeance, uttered by a wronged girl's sweetheart under a Honolulu moon.*

a kanaka? Never!"

Farney pulled his hands from Telula's frantic grasp, and with a laugh of scorn, quickly left the lanai. As he brushed by me in the dark, how my fingers

ached to grasp his white throat and throttle the life out of him! But, by an effort that left me weak and trembling, I let him pass.

"I let him pass! I let him pass!"

I kept repeating this to myself as his tall form disappeared in the mists of the night. Yes, it was the desire for a greater vengeance that I let him pass. To still my throbbing brain I said:

"Oh, for something worse than death—worse than death—"

Then suddenly as the blood-red moon dropped into the ocean it came to me. My vengeance!

## I Swear Vengeance

"GREAT Goddess Pele, what a vengeance would be mine!" I cried aloud in exultation.

"I must think. I must be calm."

As the memory of Telula's lovely form standing pleading in the doorway, with the light streaming in soft radiance about her, I, David Lakola, realized that the tender brotherly love that I had always held for my little cousin Telula, was no more, but that now she was my very heart.

Long after Farney had gone and quiet and peace reigned about the place I ventured out of my hiding. With cautious steps I went into the dim doorway, intending to find old Moki, and reach my room and not disturb Telula.

Once in the house my eyes searched the darkened room for Moki's bent form. Not seeing him I walked softly into the large drawing room. Here, on the flower covered couch lay Telula, sobbing as if her heart would break.

Gone was all thought of waiting until the morning to let Telula know of my return. Rushing to her I cried: "Why, oh why, are you sad, little cousin?"

Telula sat up on the couch choking back her sobs, then, with a pitiful little cry of relief, she ran into my outstretched arms.

"David, oh David! I am so glad—so glad to have you home again."

With a long drawn shuddering sigh she swayed and would have slipped to the floor if I had not tightened my arms about her slender form.

It seemed ages before I could rouse old Ruta, who had been at the beck and call of Telula ever since she was laid in Ruta's arms, a motherless babe. Old, and almost blind as she was now, she was still faithful. We got Telula to bed and tried to revive her. She came to consciousness only to sink into a long spell of illness.

At last, after weeks of nursing by old Ruta, who followed the directions of Moki who was skilled in the use of herbs, Telula, pale and wan, was allowed to sit up. Gradually, as she grew stronger, I drew from her the story of her infatuation and mad love for Farney.

It seemed that when his company came to our little island to find a suitable location for their picture, in looking around for a dancer to dance with Farney, they despaired of ever getting a native girl who could take the part.

They were just on the point of sending to Hollywood for one of their stock players, when Farney discovered Telula.



At first she was indignant that such a thing should be asked of her, but, as I was in England and she was practically alone with old Ruta, her fancy was more and more intrigued with the thought of herself as "leading lady" to so handsome and brilliant a star as Farney.

As the picture progressed, Telula realized that the stuff that the director was shooting as real Hawaiian life was merely a concoction of improbable fancies strung together by a writer hammering away on a typewriter in Hollywood.

### Telula Makes Suggestions

At first the director was amused at Telula's indignation at the falseness of the script. When she tore from Farney's broad shoulders the mantle made of chicken feathers which the harassed property man had furnished, and stamped on it, the director was angry. But when with a queenly gesture, Telula took from the gayly decorated chest that the obedient Moki had brought, a brilliant, mantle, made of thousands and thousands of tiny bird feathers, and put it about Farney's shoulders, and proudly placing the feathered helmet of our kingly kinsman on his head, the director was interested. His keen mind quickly recognized the value of such intimate knowledge of the days of long ago.

Telula did not seem much elated over the homage that the director paid her, but it was of Farney, and only of Farney that she thought or cared.

Farney took readily to native life and, under Telula's competent tutelage became an expert surf-rider. He also learned to hurl the ula and spear fish.

Side by side, like two happy children, they would slide down the Barking Sand dunes, laughing at the weird sounds, and bathed at the old beach, where to bathe brings good luck.

Many were the merry trips they made over the slippery pili grass, as they tobogganed down the steep hillsides on the long narrow sleds.

Often they feasted in the primitive grass houses, sitting on mats, drinking poi from calabashes, and eating strangely flavored foods, that had been wrapped in ti leaves and cooked in underground ovens.

### Farney has an Illusion

In time Farney became completely imbued with the idea that he actually was the reincarnation of an ancient king of Hawaii. In fact, he even contemplated trying his hand at shark fishing. To kill the shark with merely a knife of stone, or a sharp shark's tooth, was a kingly sport indeed.

The director's terse and pointed remarks to Farney upon the feebleness of his intellect, had not the slightest effect upon this latest whim of his, and, preparations were well under way for this final test of his skill as a sportsman.

Telula, frantic with fear, for the safety of her lover, threatened to throw herself into the yawning mouth of the smoking crater of a distant volcano.

Farney laughed at her fears and threats, and went calmly on with his preparations for the big event.

Well, to make a long story short, as you say in America, the director, at old Ruta's frantic warning, followed Telula and rescued her from the very brink of the seething crater, in which the priests were wont to throw the victims used to appease the wrath of the Fire Gods.

After a stiff talk from the irate director, Farney seemed to realize his folly, came back to earth, and decided he was not a Hawaiian king, but only a muchly bored movie star.

For a space of time, Telula was happy with her handsome lover. But he soon became moody, and lost all of his former zest for the happy and carefree life of Hawaii. He talked longingly of the charms of distant Hollywood.

Telula tried all her wiles to win him back to his former delight in their free and easy existence, her efforts culminating in the wonderful laua, with the entire village in attendance, and Farney presiding as king. A king, indeed, he seemed to the simple minds of my people. It was thus that I found them on my return that fatal night.

After many tears and sighs, Telula confessed how Farney had spurned her, treating her with contempt. She told me how she had begged him not to go away and leave her, but marry her and take her with him. If not for the love that he bore her, then, for the sake of the little life that was on its way.

Ah, well I remember the scorn and contemptuous laughter as he flung her away from him that night!

It is well that Moki is a kahuna, and that the cunning of a long line of ancestors that knew and gathered many strange herbs, is his. My vengeance would be sure—a something worse than death—.

### In Hollywood at Last

SEVERAL months later found me at the home of Douglas Farney, in Hollywood. I was his trusted servant and confidential adviser. To make myself indispensable to his comfort and happiness was the ruling motive of my very existence.

The moving picture, "The Well-Beloved", was the sensation of a picture jaded public. They stood in long rows at the entrance of the massive theater, patiently waiting to get in and see their favorite.

As soft Hawaiian music played during the showing of the entire picture, it made it seem so real, that when ever my purpose would seem to weaken, I would slip into the grateful twilight of the theater, which was built like a magnificent temple, and, watch reel after reel of my lovely Hawaii.

With rapidly beating heart I would sit and watch Telula dance in and out of the picture. Ah, the grace of the slender figure and the childish purity of the face pictured there! At the thought of the sorrow and suffering Farney had brought to Telula, I would steel my heart to any pity that I might entertain for the man.

Night after night Farney would spend in dissipation, followed by long and grilling days before the camera. It was not a great while before his director curtly informed Farney that it was necessary for him to cut out all this foolishness and get down to business; that his many absences and extreme nervousness would have to be stopped. That the overhead was eating up the money too fast.

Well, after a particularly wild night at a party, that had been given at the home of one of the stars, hidden up in the foothills of Hollywood, Farney came in about seven o'clock the next morning.

I had laid out his clothes ready for him to change, for there had been a hurry call from the director, to come at once, as the whole company was going to leave to be gone on location for several days. Farney was in such a highly nervous state that it was impossible for him to dress himself.

Shaking and haggard, he sat on the side of the bed, trying to pull himself together. I took a bottle that I always carried carefully guarded, in my pocket, and dropped several drops into a small glass of water.

### Distilled Poison

I HANDED the glass to Farney and he mechanically drained the entire contents at one gulp. Marvelous was the change that came over him. In a few seconds his dull eyes took on new life. His tense drawn face relaxed. His shaking hands steadied, as, with my assistance he changed into his street clothes, and we drove rapidly to the studio.

Wilder and wilder grew the nights, and less and less



time would Farney give to the studio. It grew necessary for me to go with him everywhere. He had grown so quarrelsome, that the crowd of small-town boys and girls, who had found fame and fortune on the silver sheet at Hollywood, and tried to impress their world with their importance, by wearing the most extreme clothes, and buying enormous brightly colored nickel-plated automobiles, soon grew tired of their former favorite.

But for the drops in my little gold vial Farney would not have been able to work at the studio at all.

Well did Moki brew this precious liquid from the herbs that grew in wild and lonely places known only to him, the last of the great kahunas.

The director grew more and more sarcastic, for Farney had become so careless that he did not trouble

even to put on his make-up properly, but left all the details to me.

As Farney's pictures were still very popular with the public, the Golden Picture Company took a hand in trying to straighten him up.

### Draining the Dregs of Life

HE was curtly ordered by the brusque business manager to cut down on cigarettes; to lay off booze; to stay away from wild parties; to hit the hay every night before twelve o'clock, and, above all, be more prompt when he was called onto the set.

When he found that all he could say or do had not the slightest effect on Farney, the manager ordered a



*With a long drawn shuddering sigh she came to my outstretched arms*



doctor and a nurse into his home to look after him. The highest priced publicity man was put on the job of keeping his name before the adoring public, whose ideal hero he must remain.

At one of his personal appearances, with the aid of Moki's little drops, Farney regained for the moment all of his former charm. As he entertained the vast audience, the doctor and nurse anxiously scanned his handsome haggard face for the slightest sign of a weakening on his part, so they could spirit him away before it was too late.

In Hollywood the feasts are not given out under the open sky, with flowers and songs of birds, as in Hawaii, but between the four walls of the numerous spacious homes there. Hot house flowers everywhere. Not simple hula dancers, but exotic alluring dancers, in strange and wonderful costumes, that make them seem more fascinat-

ing to drink-benumbed brains thru the haze of sweet scented smoke.

### A Horrible Inertia

**A**N inertia, resembling nothing but death, stole over Farney. He would not eat, or go out if he could avoid it. Several times at the studio, when the scenes were all set, and the director would call, "Camera", Farney had failed to register and I would be ordered to take him home. He lost all desire for anything but the little drops.

(Continued on page 87)

*Her bloodless lips smiled  
and a deep look of peace  
lighted her glazed eyes as  
the kind hearted mission-  
ary made them man and  
wife*





# THE JINX ON ROOM 23

*Could Conan Doyle have explained this ghost that followed  
Hollywood transgressors? A story told by a  
Hollywood Hotel Detective*

**D**ON'T occupy that room . . . there's a jinx . . . no telling what may happen.

Ever since the Lukins murder it's been strangely inhabited by weird, peculiar forms and eerie bodies that may cause you harm . . . No one has ever slept in Room 23 and escaped that uncanny spell, that supernatural visitation that seems so much a part of it . . .

Those are the thoughts which kept running through my mind. I couldn't let those newlyweds spend their honeymoon in that particular section of a famous Hollywood hotel. It wouldn't be right, and we detectives should do as much to protect the living as to find out who killed the dead!

And I couldn't permit that young couple,—that jovial young comedy star and his pretty girl bride,—to take the chance of having a jinx cast on their lives. Not I!

You remember the Lukins murder. Of course you do! Old Man Lukins was too well known, too wealthy, too celebrated here and abroad, to escape publicity when his maimed body was found lying across the bed early one morning, not so long ago, in Room 23.

He was a queer old duffer. Quiet. Unobtrusive. Sullen sometimes. Always seeming to hide something that he didn't want the world to know and which he kept buried deep within his mind in mysterious seclusion. A sort of social recluse, despite his money.

You couldn't exactly say that old Lukins had any enemies. At least, while he wasn't a paragon of pleasantries, he didn't go out of his way to turn people against him, so that's why his death remains a mystery.

It happened like this:

One morning, just after the usual group of movie celebrities had either gone out to play tennis or golf,—as they do when they're not working,—the postman brought Lukins a letter. The writing on the envelope, scrawled and twisted, seemingly the copy-book efforts of a child, yet done with a peculiar, foreign flourish, was odd enough to arouse suspicion.

"Old Man Lukins," the missive read,— incidentally no one ever called him anything else, "We have the goods on you. If you don't hide \$20,000 in the palm tree on the corner of Franklin and Ivar by 11 p. m., Friday night we'll get you. We won't get the money then, but it's up to you to have it there."

There was no signature whatever.

## A Case for the Police

"**W**HAT do you think of this?" inquired the old man, bringing the letter to me. "You ought to handle this for me. You're the house detective."

"It's a case for the police," I suggested, because, after all, hotel detectives aren't supposed to touch anything of this sort, except to cooperate with the proper authorities in giving information pertaining to their own sphere.

Lukin's face blanched, and the funniest look I have ever seen came into his eyes. It was the weird, hunted look of an animal at bay, of a man driven to his wits' end.

"What's the matter?" I asked quickly, noting it.

"Oh, nothing!" he replied, pulling himself together, "Only, of course, I don't wish any notoriety, such as

I'd get if I turned this over to the police. I'd prefer to have you handle the case for me. I'll pay you anything you ask."

And, as far as he was concerned, that settled the decision.

The first thing I did was to hire two other men. One, an elderly fellow, was to be Lukins' constant companion. He would sleep, eat, live and go about everywhere with him. He would be known as Lukin's secretary, would receive all of the old man's telephone calls and guests and, after he'd satisfied himself that everything was okeh, would then pass either the phone call or the visitor on to the old man himself,—though, of course, this part of the duties wasn't unduly heavy inasmuch as Lukins knew only a few people here.

The other fellow I engaged was a special watchman who was to sit all night in a chair placed on the veranda just outside of Lukins' window. And what a Samson this fellow was! Six-and-a-half feet tall, built like a truck-horse. If he ever got hold of a murderer he'd make mince-meat of him. Oh, boy! If Lukins didn't feel well protected,—well, then, the luck of the Irish doesn't run true.

For two weeks everything ran along smoothly in spite of the fact that the "money" Lukins put in the designated palm tree was nothing but stage currency.

That tree was watched constantly. We got permission of a neighbor who lived across the street from the hiding-place to "plant" two armed men in the garage day and night, one of whom was always on the lookout for any suspicious character who might be seen snooping around and, when they reported that nobody at all was seen to go near the tree we felt secure in believing that the whole matter of the letter was the work of some practical joker who simply disliked the old man and wanted to shake him up with a good scare.

Naturally, after a month, then another month went by and the atmosphere had apparently cleared, Old Man Lukins decided he didn't need any more protection, though this was against my advice.

"Listen here," I told him, "the writer of that note probably is wise and lying low. It's a habit of criminals to wait their chance before springing their trap, and you'd better keep on being watchful."

No, that didn't do any good. Lukins summarily dismissed his "secretary" and the heavyweight night man, let the two armed pickets go and convinced himself that he was doing the right thing.

"I always did think the thing was hokum!" he remarked to me. "Why should I worry, anyhow?"

## A Victim of the Jinx

**S**ILLY old ass. If he'd watched the signs, the obvious handwriting on the wall, he'd probably be alive today.

But he was blind to everything in his utter stupidity and bullheadedness, and continued thinking about the matter as a practical joke.

For several days, perhaps a week and a half, he lived his usual life. In the morning, early, he'd rise and breakfast in his room at the hotel. Then his chauffeur'd bring his car around and Lukins would disappear for hours, motoring, probably, to the beaches or out into the



surrounding country. About half past four he'd return to the hotel, take his bath and an afternoon nap and, on awakening, read his mail, have dinner and then go to some early picture show, after which he'd retire.

His habits were as regular as clockwork. He never varied ten minutes a month in doing the same things

over and over again.

But . . .

One Wednesday morning, I remember, he decided he'd eat his breakfast in the dining hall, and, funny enough for him, he seemed disposed to speak to people and was unusually jovial, stopping here and there to chat a mo-

*The mysterious letter to old man Lukins was without signature.*





ment with other house guests and even to play a bit with a couple of children whose parents lived in the hotel.

Then he went back to his room.

A short time later, his chauffeur called for him as usual. The switchboard operator rang his room. There was no answer. Funny, she thought, inasmuch as she believed she remembered having seen him walk down the hall toward his room. She asked the clerk and two of the bellboys. No one had seen him. And so one of the bellhops went down to knock at his door.

In a flash the fellow came hurrying back to the desk, his face as white as a sheet, his fingers trembling, his whole aspect one of terror.

"He's in there . . . lying on the bed . . . all bloody . . . dead!" he stammered. "I knocked, couldn't get any answer, tried the door, it was open . . . and I found him there, like that!"

Poor Old Man Lukins! They'd murdered him in coldest blood. A great gash in his throat showed where someone had stabbed him, while a bruise on his head indicated that he'd been struck there by some heavy object, probably a loaded sap or a bottle or a club.

Square across the bed he lay, his hands clutching at the coverlet, his face distorted. Everything bloodsoaked.

It was a terrible, violent, quick death! Almost instantaneous. A slaughtering just as a butcher kills a beef or a pig!

It was weeks before the hotel was quiet again. Police, detectives, curiosity-seekers, newspaper reporters made the usually quiet place fairly bristle. The most famous sleuths came from all parts of the country to solve the mystery. Nearly everybody in Hollywood was questioned or voluntarily offered some solution.

The most famous correspondents were sent by papers from all points to cover the story. If Old Man Lukins had lived a life of quiet retirement, his death certainly was a notorious one, followed by a flood of scandalous publicity.

Things that nobody had ever suspected,—and which the Old Man had probably never done,—were brought to light and mouthed over in a disgustingly sensational fashion by the reporters, and details of Lukins' life that those who knew him could never believe found their way easily into print.

They even made a notorious *roué* out of the simple old buzzard!

Of course, in time the smoke blew away and people even forgot about Lukins' death in the excitement of thinking about something newer and more recent. And the quiet, almost cloister-like routine of the hotel was resumed so that nobody would ever have suspected anything wrong had taken place.

### A Mysterious Visitation

THE first inkling that something spooky was going on in Room 23 was one night shortly after midnight when Miss Callas, a wealthy, middle-aged spinster who had come out to Hollywood to view and comment upon the Bacchanalian revelries that her home-town paper said she'd find there, dashed into the lobby, wild-eyed, terror-stricken, saying that she'd been awakened by weird noises and the sight of a strange, uncanny light that seemed to shine at intervals on the walls.

There was nothing to do but to believe her tale. She insisted that she be moved at once to another wing of the house.

"But I haven't another room!" protested the night clerk. "There's nothing wrong with the one you're in, Miss Callas."

"There was a murder in it once!" she protested. "I've never felt funny about those things,—but my eyes and ears don't lie, and I've seen the visitation!"

The clerk went on to explain.

"Of course that room isn't haunted," said he, somewhat contemptuously. "We've had any number of occupants in it since the tragedy and nobody has complained of anything out of the ordinary happening."

"How long ago was the murder?"

For a moment the clerk figured. Then, ascertaining his dates, a look of surprise crept over his face.

"By gad!" he said. "It was just a year ago the 23rd!"

"And today is the twenty-third. It's after midnight now, you know!" Miss Callas was resolute. "By the way, who occupied that room before me?"

"He was a young chap who worked in the laboratory of one of the studios. A photographer, I believe, learning the business. He was a nice young fellow."

"Interesting, if true," remarked the old maid, sardonically. "I insist upon being moved, anyway. I don't want to hear anybody's bones rattling in my closet and I don't like skeletons nor strange sounds and lights."

Early the next morning we saw that Miss Callas' wish was gratified. However, the poor old lady had spent a sleepless night sitting in Room 23 with all lights lit, all the window shades tightly drawn and the door into the hall wide open.

Her new room in a second-floor wing was large, airy and comfortable. One of the best in the house. She seemed happy there. A few days after she'd taken possession, however, she began ailing, complaining, as it were, of a strange, lethargic sleepiness that stole over her and seemed to stupefy her to such an extent that she was forced to take to her bed.

### Sleeping Sickness

PHYSICIANS apparently could do nothing to relieve her. She sank lower and lower. The colored porter of the hotel insisted that she suffered from the jinx of the murder chamber,—but doctors diagnosed her case as sleeping sickness.

It was forty-two days before she could be aroused!

There were various occupants of the tragedy room,—number 23. Suggestive in itself, yet giving only a superstitious, sensitive mind reason for apprehension.

But, by complaints about and occurrences in Room 23 there began to develop a regular, full-fledged mystery. Tenants would take the room, retire and be visited with the weird, peculiar noises and lights,—just as Miss Callas had said. The hotel manager himself tried sleeping there one night to find out what it was all about but soon he, like the rest, reported the identical condition.

"Something *has* to be done!" he decreed, and carpenters were at once set to work installing the newest of wall beds in place of the former four-poster, for the room was really one of the choicest in the hostelry.

Thinking that everything was in ship-shape order now, the management assigned a newly-married couple to the apartment. A week, two weeks, three weeks, passed and nothing unusual occurred.

### Death and Financial Loss

THEN, suddenly, the bride was taken violently ill with a mysterious ailment of which she died but a short time afterward.

It was a beautiful funeral. Mrs. C—— came of a wealthy family of influence and position, and St. Stephen's church became a veritable maze of flowers as her magnificent casket stood at the altar rail and the pews were filled with sorrowing mourners.

And the procession to the cemetery, too, stands as memorable, while the group at the graveside comprised a large number of motion picture people whose names are world-widely known. It was indeed an impressive service.



The cortege started home, the widower's car, of course, leading. It was slow and careful driving done by the chauffeur, and yet . . .

As the limousine rounded a street corner, a delivery truck crashed into it. There was a heap of twisted metal and broken glass, a blot on the pavement,—and when rescuers went to the wreckage they found the widowed bridegroom, returning from his wife's funeral, lying with his neck broken beneath the wreckage.

Again the death chant. And again the exorcism of the jinx of Room 23!

Sensible people laugh at the men-

tion of the word "jinx". That's precisely what Mrs. Harriet Breene, the capitalist, did when someone told her at the hotel about the mysterious harbinger of misfortune that hung over Room 23, in which she was domiciled. "Nonsense!" she jibed. "You'll never get me to believe that."

She was a tremendously rich woman, with varied financial interests. In fact, financiers often used to marvel at her keen brain and at the manner in which she took risks and always seemed to come home laden down with profits.

One day she walked into the hotel, announcing calmly that she had

*Square across the bed he lay, his hands clutching the coverlet.*

sunk a cool million in an oil proposition that looked promising! It was almost too much to believe, but her proof was undeniable, and we all held our breath until we could see what the outcome would be.

This Mrs. Breene is the sort of woman who instantly makes friends, a thorough democrat. To know her is to like her, and, despite her wealth, she is as much one of the people as the veriest charwoman. There is no class distinction that she will recognize. No snobbery. She has been known to take the maid out for an afternoon drive with her in her car, always appearing pleased that her guest,—whom she treated with the utmost consideration,—had a good time and enjoyed herself.

Therefore, when we saw her making friends with Felipe, a young Filipino employed at the hotel as a





buss-boy, we thought little or nothing of the matter, for, as Mrs. Breene explained her interest, Felipe was musically talented and she was taking steps to further his musical education.

### The Exotic Felipe

HE WAS an attractive little fellow, at that. Dark-skinned. Large, black, romantic eyes in whose depths seemed to shine all the mystery of the ages. His English was quaint, very broken. Seemingly, he failed to grasp the intricacies of American speech as rapidly as some of the other boys about the hotel, but this everybody attributed to his natural reticence.

For more than a year he had been very sad and utterly silent. As usual, it was a love affair that caused this mood,—or, rather, the sudden termination of his amour through the death of his sweetheart who committed suicide without any hint or explanation.

Felipe's playing of the piano aroused no little comment throughout the hotel, but it was Mrs. Breene who induced him one evening to give a recital, of which she took charge as patroness. However, it is doubtful if Felipe ever would have the backbone to face the public, for while he played well, he was so nervous that it was pitiful to see him and, immediately following the recital he disappeared as if into thin air.

The weeks rolled on. Nothing seemed to happen to arouse the hotel from its ordinary quietude, and Mrs.

Breene continued to assist Felipe in his study of the piano. She even spoke of launching him in concert.

But the boy's attitude grew more and more strange. The more he studied, it appeared, the more reticent and retiring he grew, until he apparently had nothing to say to anyone except to his benefactress,—and then even to her he would talk in a sort of hangdog manner with his eyes on the floor and the tones of his voice so softly modulated that it was difficult to hear his words.

Even the Filipino boys at the hotel gave him up as hopeless. He became almost as much of a recluse as the late Old Man Lukins.

It was late one night that the unexpected happened. A dance had been going on in the lobby of the hotel. Everybody who was anybody at all, of course, attended it. Film stars. Society folk. Young girls. Old men.

And Mrs. Breene, in celebration, was hostess to a good-sized party of fashionables, comprising a group of the social-elect.

Between dances the heiress had an idea that she'd entertain her guests with a piano recital by her protégé who, it developed, was not one of the bellboys then on duty. A page was despatched to his room, situated in a vine-covered building set some distance from the hotel proper in the midst of a heavily-foliaged tropical garden.

What a spot for romance! What a sylvan dell for the tender genius of a budding virtuoso! That was what Mrs. Breene thought every time she passed the out-building on her way to the tennis courts or for her almost-daily walk into the sage-covered, purple hills.

*"I have seen the visitation!" insisted the woman. "I insist on being moved!"*





### A Breaking Heart

WHAT the page saw when he gained admittance to Felipe's quarters startled him. Felipe seated cross-legged on the floor, tears streaming down his cheeks, holding a photograph to his lips. Alternately he'd kiss it and fold it tightly to his breast, moaning, as if the sight of the pictured image caused him no end of anguish.

"Oh," he wept in his picturesque English, "I could not play to-night! I can never play again,—*never!* Ay, que piedad!" The latter in his native Spanish.

The page returned to Mrs. Breene with the message. "I'm afraid Felipe's sick," she commented to one of her friends. "But, wait,—I'll get him to play. He surely wouldn't refuse me!"

It was after a deal of pleading, cajoling and wheedling that Felipe was induced even to meet Mrs. Breene's assemblage.

"I am so broke-hearted!" he wept onto the kind, motherly shoulder of his Lady Bountiful. "When she died I have los my,—como se dice?—my *inspiracion!*"

"Let me see the picture, dear boy," pleaded Mrs. Breene innocently, sympathetically.

But the very words roused an almost leonine fire in the young musician. He would clasp the photograph to his breast furiously, his large, sloe eyes darting arrows of fire.

"No, senora," he kept saying, hiding the portrait in the folds of his shirt. "She ees—dead."

"You will play,—just once?"

Felipe inclined his head. What the Senora Breene wished, that he would do. *Si, si.* But just one piece tonight, please, just one."

"My young friend has asked me not to make him meet anybody this evening," Mrs. Breene explained to her assemblage. "He is apparently ill, a bit disturbed mentally, and very sad, but he will play for us."

Greeted by a little ripple of applause, a subdued murmur of approbation of his quite obvious good looks, Felipe seated himself at the piano. He was dressed simply, just as he

had come from his room, in white duck trousers and a white shirt, open at the collar, revealing a smooth, clear, olive skin and a delicate, almost effeminately-rounded throat.

"What a picture!" somebody whispered.

But, hearing him strike a deep, heavy rolling chord,—a thing like the thunderous growl of an approaching storm,—the gathering stilled and the atmosphere cleared to an acute, attentive silence.

Bent low over the piano he sat. Forehead at times almost touching the keyboard. Chord after chord he struck in a wave-like succession, accustoming his fingers to the feeling of the keys.

And then he started to play.

"Gad!" one of the men murmured, enraptured. "What a touch!"

Quieter and more calm became the room. One or two of the auditors leaned a bit forward in their chairs. And Mrs. Breene thrilled inwardly at (*Continued on page 86*)



Head flung high, eyes glistening, he plunged the dagger into his throat.



# LOVE'S PENALTY

I MET her soon after coming to California, about eight years ago, when the movies were younger, and a stripling from a small Indiana town might make a beginning.

My twenty years of life had not taught me the mirage quality of expectations. Back there, reading a magazine recounting the doings of the great movie personalities, gazing out across moon washed corn fields from my bedroom window, I imagined many things of myself, enacting heroic roles within the theatre of my soul. And back there, instead of the fierce white reality of Cooper-Hewitts, there was only a grimy yellow oil lamp, and in lieu of heartening melodies, an orchestra of frogs and crickets.

And so, when I met Fay in Los Angeles, I was the merest of extras, a half baked, snub nosed boy, tussling with the cinema fates to make things meet, often owing room rent, missing meals. Nor did I in my bravest imaginings conceive of myself as the popular and high salaried director that I am as I write this confession of ingratitude. . . . ingratitude to the girl who made my success possible.

For, in my immaturity I had fallen in with a lot of fellows whom I since realized were of a cheap and unprogressive type; mostly other extra men, whose thoughts were not concerned with art or the mirroring of life, but with the pettiest amours and most sordid intrigue, always some plan to do some brainless girl of her virtue, and if she had any, of her money.

## Chance Meeting

FAY came along at the time when I was grievously worried. The sort of food I ate, the hours I slept, and the atmosphere I lived in, were altogether making for corrosion of my spirit. As I was averaging scarcely fifteen dollars a week, I was greatly discouraged. I had been in Los Angeles four months and in making the rounds of the movie studios, the great stars and directors seemed as far removed from my pitiful existence as beings who might have lived on another plane.

I was on the point of giving up this extra work and securing a job in some sort of strictly commercial enterprise. I wasn't just certain as to what I could do, but my peasant soul was harried by lack of security and the ease that my family in Indiana had enjoyed for years through the assuredness of broad, fertile acres, a home that was their very own, and the sure integrity of old friends.

Probably I did not feel rooted in propitious soil out in Los Angeles; for there is nothing as troubling and uncertain as "extra" work, and nowhere is the bosh about democracy and equality so thoroughly exploded as on a movie lot. For there are rigid class distinctions; the "extras" huddle about by themselves, it being quite understood that they do not endeavor to become intimate with the stars or even regularly employed stock players. Of course, a pretty extra girl might be sought out by a male star, director or character actor but never may the lowly extra take the initiative.

Then, one night as I came home to a cheap cluttered apartment I shared with an assistant camera man named Blaine, he said to me:

"X, I have a couple of girls lined up for us tonight. I don't know how game they are. One of them works in a curio store on Hill Street and the friend she'll get you

*She had thought of him for years as the hero of a high-hearted, beautiful romance—illicit, true, but magnificent and sweet. Then she met him again—*

is a school teacher. . . . you see . . ."

"What! Bob Blaine, can that school-teacher stuff as far as I am concerned . . ." He opened his mouth as though to clarify the matter but I raised my voice and declared: "None of these dried up, bespeckled bookworms for mine. And anyhow . . ." I laughed inwardly, . . . "why don't you take her for yourself, give me the other one!"

But he said we might as well take a chance, that he hadn't seen the school teacher himself. I ended up by going.

An agreeable surprise waited me. The extra girls and feminine strays that Bob and I had consorted with had been of the blatantly pretty order, as a rule and their favors had rarely been difficult to secure. Poor devils! They are almost all alike. . . the usual drifting girls, over sentimentalized, who keep the photos of blankly handsome youths on their chiffoniers, decorate their walls with the pennants of colleges they know nothing of, go in for leather pillow covers, decorated with poppies or poinsettias twined round banal mottoes, and gloat over Service's poem about the Madonna in the streets.

## Sympathy

BUT these two were decidedly different. How did Bob ever meet them, I wondered.

Their little apartment was in excellent taste, and there were emotions and ideas clustered in the glints and shadows of their eyes that eluded my understanding.

Bob's girl was small, olive skinned, reserved, with big brown brooding eyes, a firm DuBarry nose, and knobby chin. Somehow or other she seemed a grave little poem on autumn, an illusion perhaps fostered by the russet, brown, and red of her simple tailored garb.

Fay, who explained during the evening that she taught kindergarten for a living was not much taller than Grace, but seemed taller because of her extreme slenderness. Everything about Fay was small except her eyes, which were a blue blaze and fairly wide. Her face was somewhat smaller than most faces, a perfect oval of tenderly colored loveliness, her nose diminutive and piquant, her mouth a little red wound. Her hair was the color of dull beaten gold so fine spun that in the light flooded room it seemed one solid mass, and when her head moved the sheen shifted across her hair in broad gold bars.

A warm personality, I thought. Perhaps a year or two older than myself. Her laugh had something of the quality of lightly splashing water in cool dark places.

The slender little school teacher made a hit with me. Whether it was because of her flowing frailty or the fact that she seemed tremendously interested in my problems . . . allowing me to monopolize the lime light of interest, I cannot say.

"You should not feel discouraged," she said at one point. "Your movie work may be poorly paid and you may think you can never get to where those great stars are, but I think you have it in you to do some very fine things. All you need, as do most of us, who think we are artists in embryo, is a chance for expression. . ."

## A New Emotion

WHEN Bob and I went home that night my blood was singing. A rosy emotion incredibly high and splendid wrapped me in its assuring folds. Exquisite ecstasies thrilled through my mind or seemed to troop



across my heart. Here was a girl! I thought to myself, all my troubles were over. With Fay as my inspiration, let the Bushmans, and Kerrigans and Griffiths tremble on their thrones. I was coming.

I thought that I possessed the open sesame to cloud trailing glories and ineffable fame, and was vaguely disturbed during the next few days when I was unable to obtain work instant.

### Fay's Attraction

LIKE all intolerant youths, the fact of Fay's preciousness dimmed the appeal of other girls for the time, and made me positively ungenerous and ungallant both in my actions toward them and my opinions of them. The extra girls in particular I would have none of.

Densely ignorant myself, I was never less acutely aware of Fay's spiritual, or should I say, biological superiority. This vexed me and thumped hard at the doors of my vanity at first. But as time went on and Fay fell in love with me, her higher mental and esthetic qualities proved, quite flatteringly, that I must be "some pumpkins" to enjoy her ardent approval.

For Fay did fall in love with me. Why? God only knows. Why do fine bred girls ever consider mediocre, inarticulate fellows?

Let us blame the chemistry of life. Reason and esthetic distinctions alike are but dimly heard remonstrances against the clamor of passion. In those days young blood hums an antiphony to disquieting thoughts and younglings remember that old father God has endowed them with lips.

Candidly Fay astonished me. From teaching kindergarten and delving into serious lore to ingenuously enjoying "parties" at my apartment—at times when Bob was out—is apparently incongruous. In fact for obvious reasons, Bob later moved away.

### Dangerous Nearness

IT was shortly after I had the apartment to myself that Fay came over and prepared dinner for me one night. We were both oddly nervous when Fay, in a most casual tone, remarked, "Grace will be in Riverside for several days; an aunt who lives down there is going to entertain her."

Instantly, a significant silence.

Up to this time Fay and I had made love in the manner of youth, with some cautious reservations. It seemed understood in the silent language of lovers, that there were bounds that must be respected, enchantments that must be stopped short of.

For several moments there in the little apartment I trembled all over with a torrid glow, and within me warm gusts swept upward, lodging in my throat, stifling me. In my seething brain mingled transports of agony and delight. Strangely imagining that I might faint in the throes of this delicious yet throbbing anticipation I went instinctively to the window and threw it up.

As I stood there, breathing in cool draughts of night, Fay came over and stood beside me. I slipped my arm about her and together we looked out into the sable gardens of heaven overgrown with countless phosphorescent flowers, and at the checkered lights of distant windows, at dark huddled masses of trees and houses. The evening was vaguely perfumed with roses, magnolias and wet grass.

In the little kitchenette rose the aroma of coffee and the redolence of a simmering steak. Fay turned round toward the kitchenette, her features deeply crimson, an ardor and dreaming in her eyes. I caught her round the waist and drew her into a vise-like embrace.

### The Flame of Love

FOR a second she stiffened as though surprised and then I felt her quiver in my arms. Time old in-

stinct seemed to warn her to escape but stranger than that was her love for me.

We ate no dinner at all, as presently we discovered the steak and potatoes were burned beyond salvage.

My world had changed. Some one believed in me, cared for me. That some one was Fay. I will not attempt to recall all the varied means we employed to be together, to deceive Grace, to disarm suspicion.

Fay told me of books to read, of authors of whom I had never heard, but whose massive dreams and strange colors and subtle cadences opened up new worlds for me. She suggested a piano which I rented and which she played with the touch of a butterfly, as she sang in a high, limpid resonance, incredibly beautiful tunes—such as love songs of Schubert and Grieg.

This was when I began to make my first real progress in pictures. First I became an assistant director through a fatefully fortunate chance, and the experience enabled me later, in the illness of M. R. to direct the photoplay which brought me success and some fame immediately.

### Ingratitude

NOW, every one knows of my marriage about two years after to a famous woman star, but nobody knows of the bitterness and the pathos of my gradual disavowance from Fay.

"Yes, you're right X," she told me the last night I saw her. "We were wonderful pals and I think it's good business for you to marry some one who is making money so that you'll make common cause together. These are highly practical but damnably unkind and unbeautiful views—but I'm not the 'injured innocence' kind and I won't trouble you, there won't be any shooting or suicide or tragedy of any kind. . . Your narrow hearted idea of marriage, anyhow, X, makes me doubt that I could love you always—no I think you've revealed a cheap-jack soul, X. . . It will be just as well that we do not grow old together!"

In many respects Fay had herself to blame. For instance, she lacked a certain stamina. There was a fragility and weariness of spirit to her and a disturbing sense of values that often exasperated me. She would do anything I suggested and for a time we made the rounds of the cabarets, usually drinking too much so that Fay would become enervated and dull and negative.

The fact that she had always acceded to my whims made me suspect her strength of character, and the fact that she flouted what she termed "garish, gaudy movie queens," at times when I suggested her giving up teaching to go into pictures, stung me to anger. Too, she had seemed colorful at first but I found her losing the dash and sparkle of the sophisticated actresses I met.

And so I gradually dropped away, convinced that I had outgrown Fay, even deciding, by queer ratiocination that she was responsible for my spending far more time than necessary round the cabarets. Anyhow I was no longer poor and obscure so I married F. A. We now have a baby son.

### Ashes!

AND then six years later to meet Fay and make an ass of myself! To completely justify her contention that mine is a cheap-jack soul. To enable her to smile in the knowledge that mine was at best a cheap unworthy love. I have writhed about it for weeks now, for I realized something else too.

It was at the corner of Third and Broadway. There she was, coming toward me, changed very little in six years, a smile of generous welcome playing round her little mouth. Yet something about her mocked me, twitted my spirit, put me on the defense, made me sum up a certain unnatural bluster.





*Imagining that I might faint in the throes of this delicious yet throbbing anticipation, I went instinctively to the window and opened it. As I stood there Fay came and stood beside me.*



"So, it's Mr. X. V. Well, I read about you quite often and see your photos in the newspapers. . . how is the world treating you?"

How was the world treating me! In my most august tones, I replied: "Haven't you seen any of my recent photoplays, particularly 'the Eleventh . . . '?"

"Well, you know, X, I never go to movies. I'm so tired after teaching, and I have my music and there's so little time in which even to see all the good plays and hear the concerts. . . and. . ."

I was wounded to the quick by her careless indifference to my achievements. Unthinkingly and blindly, I broke in, "So—er. . . you, Fay. . . you. . . er. . . have reformed, too! . . . I have my wife and baby, of course, and. . . well you know the sort of life I used to lead, Fay. . . well, I've cut out all that sort of thing, and. . ."

Fay's face flushed. Her eyes glistened like blue cowed lightning, and her lips moved tremulously, as though she would weep. Then, with a gulping effort she pressed her lips together and surveyed me from head to foot with a gaze that meant only one thing, that in her opinion I was the most despicable cad she had ever known.

I wanted to pass on, but felt helpless. My knees

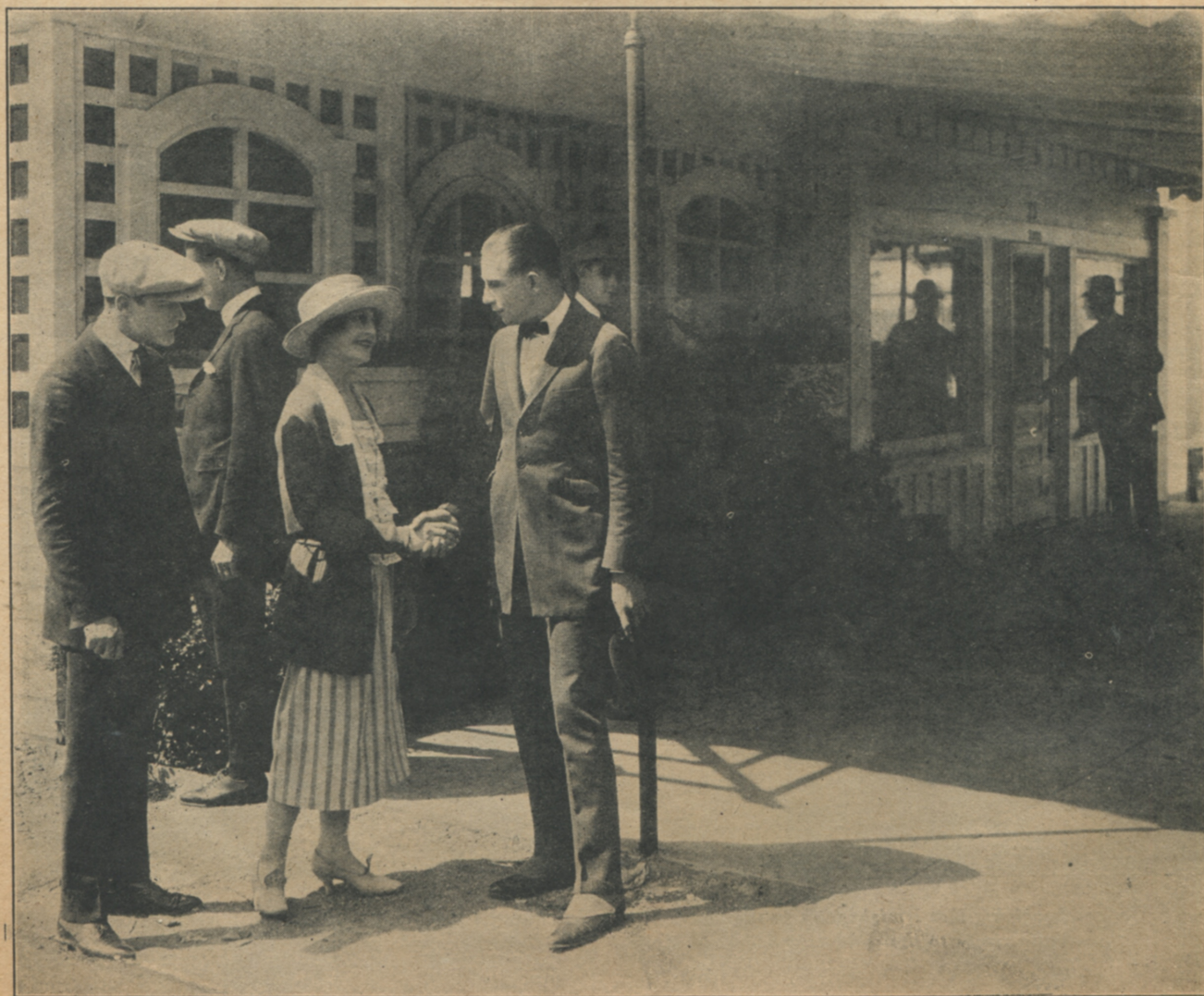
wobbled. Tears sprang into her eyes, as she laid one little hand over my sleeve and whispered scornfully, "That sort of thing!" I was feverishly nervous. Although she had never had occasion to strike me, during our time blurred romance, I felt that she was about to slap me stingingly across my face.

Bud she didn't. Her lips curled in fine contempt, her eyes flashed at me for another moment. Then she passed on into a sea of faces and bodies and noises and I was alone, miserably, abjectly, alone.

I stood stock still. I thought of the night we had gazed out together at the stars, and of the ensuing year in which she changed me from a callow failure into a confident success and. . .

Ever since this wretched meeting, I have seen how coarse and vulgar is my wife's beauty and how commonplace is my wife's mind, compared to Fay's. And it seems to me that my wife typified the peacock traits and shoddy culture of most screen celebrities, that after all, we are very trivial and crass, that sometimes I must go down on my knees before Fay knowing that mine is a cheap-jack soul, that I was never worthy of kissing the hem of her garment.

*"So, Fay, you have reformed, too! . . . I have my wife and baby. . . I've cut out all that sort of living."*





# The WOLF of HOLLYWOOD

*The cleverest criminal ever apprehended goes  
on with confession of those crimes that  
astonish even hardened police.*

I HAVE been frightened a number of times. Once a copper held a gun on me, and might have shot me if a pal hadn't accidentally dropped a spare brick on his head. Once a woman put poison in my tippie. Once I almost stepped on a rattle snake. Another time I hit a prize fighter on the head with my sap, not knowing who he was—and the sap broke and did him no damage.

But never was I so stricken with horror as on that night in the gardens of old Bill Nice when I discovered Bertha Smith sitting on the terrace with Richard Douglas, a Hawkshaw who has put more men behind the bars than has whiskey.

Douglas was disguised as a member of the "way back when" society, with lots of gray spinach on his chin but I knew him by his voice.

Here he was talking with the fluff I thought was eating out of my hand, the girl through whom I hoped to arrange a meeting with Nice. And when I met Mr. Nice this time I was going to torture him to death to avenge my pal, Dago Ed, and to take what was in his safe.

The letters written to Nice's wife, Nalga, Hollywood's great tragedy queen, by her lover Jay Reel, the ingrate comedian, were what I wanted most. I had killed a man to get them. I had sent them to Nice by Dago Ed. Ed had said Nice had given him a hundred dollars and kicked him out. I had thought Ed, poor chap, was double crossing me. So I had hanged him. Then I had planted on his body a couple of letters I hadn't offered for sale and had phoned Douglas.

I knew Douglas suspected I had stolen those burned mush letters, but I believed I had thrown him off the scent by decorating Ed's body with a couple of them.

And now for the first time I learned that Douglas suspected me of the robbery in Nalga's home and the murder of her butler, but that he also had a hunch of what I had done to Ed. Furthermore I believed he was using the girl in an attempt to trap me.

"Make him believe you are still taking the cocaine he gives you," Douglas was saying. "And when the time is ripe, when he is in his cups, get him to bragging about himself. I am confident he killed Nalga's butler and his own friend. But I can't prove it. If he tells you anything we can check up on it and use it against him."

Lucky for me I had been prowling through old Nice's home and garden every night for a week, eh? Honest, I would have trusted that girl, I was so sure I owned her, body and soul—or would in a few weeks. And now to find her so two faced! Old man Nice's money had corrupted her honesty toward me—and she would even turn me over to the police!

I lay there a long time, not daring to move even after

the two had gone away. My new suit was all wet, grass stained and wrinkled. But I didn't mind that so much. I must get revenge and that right away.

I remembered I had an appointment with Bertha for ten o'clock that night. We were going to a Hollywood cabaret where all the big stars hung out on Thursday nights. She was to meet me in the lobby.

## A Little Piece of Work

WHAT should I do? The old head worked out a plan in no time. Bertha would be at the rendezvous promptly. Douglas would be there, too, disguised. I remembered now that every time I had taken the girl anywhere I had seen him, a young looking old roué with long white whiskers. If I hadn't heard his voice I wouldn't have tumbled yet.

I crawled slowly out of the garden. I went several blocks to a drug store, first brushing my clothes well and combing my long hair by guess work. I called up the Nice home and got Bertha on the wire.

"Listen, little one" I said in my politest tone. "Be sure to meet me tonight at 10 sharp. I

have a little business to attend to first. But I'll surely be there at 10—or 10:15 at the latest. That is, I believe I will. But if I'm a little later than that you'll wait any way, won't you, little one?"

"Of course," she said.

"That's a nice little girl and I'll bring you something you'll like."

Then I went back and sneaked into the garden and hid myself. Sure enough, about 9:30 Bertha and the white bearded man got into an auto and left.

I waited ten minutes, then I pushed up a window I had already adjusted and went in.

I found Bill Nice having orange juice and gin in his bedroom. A lackey was holding a tray for him, bending over the bed. I threw the heavy paper knife I had found in the library and made a bull's eye. It went straight into the lackey's back and he fell on Nice, spilling orange juice, gin, soda, glasses and tray over the millionaire and the bed spread. It was a clever throw—exactly between the shoulder blades. Another man would have bungled.

"Now, Mr. Nice," I said, having secured his full attention. "It is your turn to die. I'm going to put a nice little hole between your eyes, right on the bridge of that very ugly beak. I don't want you to say a word, however. You can prolong your life a few minutes by keeping mum."

It was all I could do to hold a straight face.

He turned a sickly green. His hands trembled, and you could count all the little veins and cords in them.

### What Happened Before

*THE Wolf, fleeing from New York with his paramour establishes himself in Hollywood where Dago Ed is his confederate. Becoming friendly with Nalga Nice, motion picture star, he murders her butler to obtain letters from her lover, Jay Reel, which Ed sells to her husband. The Wolf kills Ed and schemes to blackmail old man Nice, through his stenographer.*

*Now go on with the story*



His eyes got big and watery. His lips shook and he couldn't say a word.

"Get up," I said.

He got out of bed like an obedient boy.

### Preparing the Alibi

I MARCHED him to Bertha's room.

"I'm going to slaughter you here," I informed him watching how scared he was. I was afraid he would die of fright before I shot him, and I didn't want that. I didn't want him to go without knowing why. I had to forego physical torture for want of time. But I used the mental kind with good results.

"After you are dead," I said, "I shall put another bullet through your watch—when I have set the hands at 9:30. You see, Bertha and your detective friend left here at that time. It will look to the newspapers as though you had come into Bertha's room and she had shot and killed you. Sweet, eh? Then I shall take those letters that you have written to your wife and sell them.

"You would have saved your life had you given Dago Ed a fair price."

He got out something as though he were offering to pay a million dollars

for his life. He sank to his knees. He put his hands up to me as though I were Heaven itself and all the angels. His teeth were chattering.

I had an idea. I reached down with my left hand, and after slipping off my dainty leather glove—I never wore any but the best—I scratched his face as an angry

*The blade went  
right into the lack-  
ey's back*





woman would. I was careful to touch his flesh only with the nails. There would be no finger prints.

"Two minutes for prayer!" I said.

He tried to pray. He tried to beg. He tried to get up off his knees. He was weeping silently. His whole body was shaking as with palsy.

I never got more honest enjoyment out of any murder I ever did!

I put on my glove again after I had given Nice what I had promised. Picking up the lackey I carried him down the corridor and laid him outside Bertha's door.

It was a great temptation to go through the house and examine the strong boxes and things. But give me the credit for sense. You can't mix a love murder with robbery.

I had it framed to look as though the old man had gone crazy, found the lackey outside Bertha's door, killed him, burst into the room, seized Bertha, got his face scratched and then after a bitter struggle with her had been killed with his own gun, held in her hand. Really, it was his gun.

### A Fiend from Hell

I HAD put a pink silk night gown in his gloved hands and holding my gloved hand over his, had made his dead hands tear it. His finger prints would be found on the fabric.

The bullet-pierced watch—I had set it at 9:20 instead of

9:30—would show the time. Both Douglas and the girl had been in the house. My revenge was complete. I readjusted the window and locked it, then stole out of the front door. It was ten minutes of ten.

I hurried home, it wasn't far. I had instructed Betty what to say, bustled into my tuxedo and arrived at the cabaret at exactly 10:15, handsome, debonair, the genial host.

It was about an hour later, after finishing a dance

*Holding my gloved hands over his I made his dead hands tear the pink silk night dress. His finger prints would be on the fabric*





with Bertha and filling her glass from my monogrammed silver flask, that I called her attention to the old man with the white beard a few tables away.

"Know who he is?" I asked casually.

"I don't remember ever seeing him before. Surely he isn't an actor?"

"Yes," I said. "He's a very great actor though he has never been on the stage or the screen. His name is Richard Douglas, and they say he's quite a wonderful detective. Wonder what he's doing here? Must be on some case."

I saw her change countenance, but didn't let her see that I saw.

"Why don't you ask me what I have for you," I said to cover her confusion.

She rallied a little, blushed, even managed to smile.

"I never could guess," she said.

"Little lady," I continued. "I spent all day and most of the evening fixing a surprise for you, and honestly this is my excuse for being late."

I took out of my coat a little work of art.

It was a card, the queen of hearts. I had burned the face off with acid and had inserted in its place photographs of Bertha's face and touched them up with colors. I had finished it a few nights before, with Betty's help, and really it was quite artistic. I am always there with the alibi, too, you notice.

Bertha was touched with the gift.

"It's a good-bye gift, little lady," I said after she had exclaimed over it for some time. "I'm getting too fond of you. I love Betty and it isn't fair to her that I show you so much attention. I know you don't care for me, Bertha. You see in me only a nice old man, I hope, and a friend.

"God bless you, I would not harm a hair of your head. And I have a confession to make."

I hesitated somewhat and forced a few tears into my eyes to impress her.

"Bertha," I went on and there was a catch in my voice. "That white stuff I have been giving you is—little lady—it was criminal of me to feed it to you. It is cocaine."

I bent my head.

"Listen," I went on after a while. "Cocaine is vital to me. I have to have it. I like it. Understand? It was mere thoughtlessness that made me give it to you the first time—because I have so many friends who use it. It has become a habit with me to offer it to my friends as another man offers cigars or cigarettes or candy. See? It brings them sweet dreams, noble thoughts, magnificent ideas, delusions of grandeur, hours of gaiety, ease, gratification.

"But it gets us all in the end, little lady, that's why I feel so criminal in having given it to you. From now on you must take no more. From now on, Bertha, you and I must not see each other. I think too much of you to spoil your life."

I said much more, all, of course, for the benefit of Mr. Douglas. And after paying the check with a bill I had deftly taken from the pocket of Douglas himself as Bertha and I whirled by him in our last dance together—I called a taxicab and escorted the double faced young vixen to her home.

As double faced as the queen of hearts!

### Bertha is Jailed

**B**UT she got hers when the police came that night, and locked her up on a charge of murder. Douglas they could not find. He had disappeared as soon as he had heard of the two corpses, it seems, and, I had no doubt, was trying to find the real slayer.

Well, let him try it. He could prove nothing against me—even if he found those letters I had taken from Nice after I had sent that bullet between his eyes.

A week went by and Douglas was still missing. The girl was in jail, refusing to talk to any one but her lawyer, according to the newspapers.

And then one night Douglas stuck a gun in my ribs and sought for information. Can you fancy that?

I heard a noise and woke. I sat up in bed and rubbed my eyes. There on the wall was old Bill Nice himself, walking toward me gun in hand.

I thought I was having nightmare, but when I pinched myself, it hurt, I kept on looking at the man. He was walking down the corridor, it seemed. I can't tell you how queer it looked—walking down a corridor toward me.

Then he turned into a room and there was I. I sat there, looking at myself rummaging Bertha's dresser. And then, all of a sudden I tumbled to it. Douglas had written a scenario of the murder as he thought it had happened. He had taken the part of old Nice and some ham fat had tried to take the portrayal of my personality into his clumsy hands. And Douglas thought the picture would shake my nerve—I should break down and weep.

I burst out laughing. I sat there and yelled, it was so funny.

And then I felt the gun on my ribs—and the picture went "bläh", and the lights went on. And there was Richard Douglas, the detective, without any disguise. He seemed extremely disgusted and disappointed, I can tell you.

As soon as I could control myself, I asked him what it was all about—but I couldn't help going off into a fit of chuckling every little while.

"Douglas, Douglas, tender and true," I said, and tears of mirth were sliding down my face, "You have the rottenest films I've ever seen. But why the devil did you give a preview in my bedroom? And how did you get here? If my wife hears you, she'll be scared to death."

He gave a snarl when I mentioned my wife. Maybe he didn't think we were married. But I could have shown him the certificate. I play the game safe and careful. A wife can't testify against her husband. I always marry them.

"Wolfe," Douglas said, after giving me the fishy stare for some five minutes. I know and you know that you killed Nice and Turner. And both of us know you did it so cleverly that a poor little girl has gotten the blame for it. I had hoped to get a confession from you by this means.

"But I should have known better. I forgot that the real vicious criminal has no imagination."

I got out of bed at that, yanking my gun from under my pillow as I did so.

"Sorry!" said Douglas. "I took all the cartridges out of it before I woke you."

"You may be a detective," I said. "But you're a burglar at heart. Go out of the window you came in by, and don't wake Betty. She has a nasty tongue at times."

### I Plan to Lay Low

**I** DIDN'T laugh any more after he went. Because I knew he would watch me closely thereafter. It looked like I might have to lay low for a while, or make a big clean up and take the choo-choo back to little old New York or elsewhere.

I felt easier, however, when I read the Times next morning. It had the story all over the front page. Douglas the famous detective, after hiding for a week, had given himself up. He said he had been working on a certain theory, and it had failed. But he declared he would still prove he and Bertha were innocent.

So! Here was Douglas in jail. And Betty and I were free to skim some more cream from the Hollywood cows!

But what do you think happened? Why, Bertha gave out a statement that she had murdered Nice to save her



honor. She exonerated Douglas though he swore up and down that her statement was a lie and manufactured only to save him. They let Douglas loose. They rushed Bertha to trial. And though the district attorney did his best, the jury took only five minutes to declare her not guilty. They almost pinned a medal on her.

Of course the next story the papers carried was the marriage of Douglas and the girl.

I had made it easy for her to get out of jail with the pains I had taken to make it look like murder! Even that torn night gown with Nice's finger prints on it was used in her favor. I walked out in the yard and kicked myself  
(Continued on page 94)



*I lifted a bill from the detective's pocket as Bertha and I whirled by in our last dance*



# SHAM

*In which the shame of Sham is transmuted by courage into something sublime. Told by one of our many "supercilious Britishers" as Hollywood looks upon the colony of Englishmen who all talk largely of dukedoms and earldoms, but who apparently have no money.*

IT WAS two o'clock post meridian on a boiling hot Sunday in June.

Crystal Pier, Santa Monica, was crowded with all sorts and conditions of people—Los Angeles business men, some of them with their own wives; male and female motion picture stars; small film actors and actresses trying to look big; ham actors aping the real thing; studio electricians and their young ladies; counter jumpers from the east end of London posing as gentlemen; balloon men; casting directors; assistant casting directors trying to hobnob with stars; pork butchers; second assistant directors; furniture dealers; with their would-be smart blonde wives and dogs.

Adding color to the variegated crowd were peroxide blondes from Venice hoping to be mistaken for Claire Windsor or some other well read and brilliant actress; youths with plastered hair and Italian looks, wearing inferior flannels and calling each other Roddy and Jack; hanging-on relations of wealthy meat packers; real society people who had run down from town out of curiosity to stare at Valentino with his dogs; Tommy Meighan looking manly and muscular but sitting in the shade; Lionel Belmore talking to every one; Barbara La Marr as fascinating off the screen as on; "extra" men and women from the poorer flats of Hollywood; and last but not least all the residents of the Hollywood and the Christie Hotels who could bum a lift or afford the street car fare.

## Off the Screen—How Different

THEY were all there—the funny men, the sad men, the silent, strong men, the noisy, weak men, the painted virgins, the real virgins—I hope—the fakers and pretenders, the desirables and undesirables, the great and small wallowing in the sand until it was impossible to tell whom the bare arms and legs belonged to, or to put a pin between them.

Altogether it seemed as though pandemonium had broken loose—dogs barking and fighting, newspapers blowing round, people howling and yelling, others yelling and howling and wrestling; some playing ball and tag and riding surf boards; others sucking gum and fruits, flourishing rank cigars and ice cream cones, eating "hot dog" and pop corn; rolling, jostling, pushing, crowding; looking foolish and stupid and happy and bored, and in a few cases, nice.

It was all very different from what I had expected, and somehow I felt, as I looked at the mass of humanity struggling and wallowing round me, that the blue heavens above had opened, and that I was falling down from endless heights, head over heels.

Then a sense of dread stole over me as I thought of the littleness of man.

## Cheap Parade

"HERE WE are", I mused, "in this tiny corner of the great earth,—which itself, is but an atom in the vastness of cosmic motion—like an ant upon a hill, only less industrious and more selfish and immoral."

That noisy and vulgar parade of small accomplishment, that never-ending stream of twaddle flowing from the lips of those around me, that coarse showing off before one another, that brainless vamping and ogling, and cheap swank—how purposeless it all was!

Immediately in front of my chair and covered with sand were two nondescript looking males in loud golfing knickers and flashy ties, with a dark, would-be mysterious looking female of walrus proportions, in a one-piece bathing suit. The two males were speaking with a peculiar drawling and exaggerated accent, which I assumed was "Hollywood English", having previously heard that bastard dialect cultivated by half-wits.

Obviously, to them, I was a new Old Country man, and they were out to impress. One of them, the fellow whose chin was a negligible quantity, kept looking at me for approval every time he made a silly remark or gave vent to some alleged witticism, which was devoid of any distinctive merit, so far as I could judge.

## A Female of the Species

OF COURSE I ignored the fellow but the female it was hard not to see, for she kept nudging and touching me with almost every conceivable portion of her flabby and generous anatomy, and every little while turning her eyes coyly up at me, for all the world like a puzzled cow.

I did my best to avoid her, suffered in silence, finally muttering a feeble protest when she put both dirty feet into my lap without apologizing.

Suddenly one of the men jumped up and waved to some one in the distance, then turning to his companion, said:

"I want you to meet Major Gargan, a real English gentleman and one of my crowd at home. Lots of money, I believe, and all that sort of thing. Damn good horseman. We hunted the 'Kildares' together in the old days, before the war knocked us all to pieces and left us stranded."

## A Gentleman, Egad!

IT WAS all I could do to keep from laughing out loud. Kildare was my county in Ireland and I had not missed a run in five years before the war. The male who had spoken so glibly was surely skating on thin ice. It is not my way to keep silent when I meet a liar. Well, it was not my way, but, thank the Lord, my nature has broadened since I crossed the Atlantic and now I take a more generous view of my fellow men for life is short and we are, after all, so very little in our brief and shallow existence. I have, since breaking away from a world of barren traditions, taken unto myself the motto of "Live and let live."

The walrus wiped her feet on me once more and sat up with an expression which I concluded was intended to convey a mixture of refined, coy and girlish interest. I had a presentiment that a comedy was about to be staged, and smiled inwardly.

Presently the person referred to as Major Gargan, after considerable difficulty in picking his way through the grovelling mob, reached the group and bowing very low said directly to the walrus:

"Awfully jolly! Er . . . these informal meetings . . . Er . . . what? Delightful place this. Just like Eastbourne! By Jove! I've seen you in town a lot. Topping weather for the saddle, this? Just came back from a canter at Beverly. Must get into the water. Er . . . er . . .



are you going to Marco Hellman's dance tonight? Believe my old school chum Lord Mountblatter is coming out soon. Had a wire from him to that effect."

I was astonished to find myself puzzling where the

devil I had seen the fellow before. His shape and gestures were strangely familiar. From the recesses of memory a voice whispered that I had known him somehow before.

*"Cut out your talk about Americans," she said. "A real gentleman wouldn't wipe his shoes on you."*





HE WAS wearing a vivid pink gray three quarter coat, badly fitting breeches which obviously had never been made for him, polo boots of a kind, and was carrying spurs and a hunting crop in his hands.

He went on without giving the others a chance to say anything. In the vernacular, he was "handing them a fast one."

"Pity we have no pack here! Rather difficult in the west to get a crowd of hunting men together. Er . . . what do you say, Vivian?"

I watched the walrus taking him in from "nose to crop." At first she was impressed but as he went on her expression slowly changed to one of grave conjecture. Behind that apparently stupid mask there lurked an intelligence sharpened by experience. Finally she spoke and her accent was silky.

### The Walrus Replies

"DO you know the Duchess of Hookum and Lord Glancore? You surely must have run across them at home! She's charming and so democratic. You must meet them. They're both going to get along well in Hollywood. Every one is wild about them. He is so very interesting."

She waited for Gargan to say something and she did not have to wait long. He came right back.

"Oh, yah! Er . . . knew them both very well at home. Of course they are democratic. We all are in the British aristocracy. Glancore was a fool to come here; he had a great future in parliament. Democratic to the backbone. Not like Americans, the biggest snobs under the sun. Always chasing after one. Look at me. I mix with every one. I never am superior with my inferiors. I have to laugh sometimes at you Americans."

He would have continued but the walrus flared up suddenly and raised her voice.

"Look here," she said, "You cut your talk about Americans. You're so far removed from being a gentleman that a real one would not wipe his shoes on you. Your Duchess friend is on your own level. I asked you that to try you out. She must be the wife or the widow of a duke and where the devil is he? And Lord Glancore—where does he get it when he's not in the peerage? There's no such title. And look here, when it comes down to family, I myself am a direct descendant of Irish kings and can show my family tree and have as much right to call myself a princess as he has to call himself a lord and more so for I have enough money to buy out three peers. I'm American and proud of it for I was born here and no damn faker can fool me. They might pull it round the studios with publicity men and casting directors but any one with an ounce of wit can spot them."

### Recognition!

GARGAN was breathless with surprise and his face flushed a bright scarlet as he tried to mutter something. Watching his confusion and trying to suppress my laughter I again tried to figure out where I had seen or known him.

When the walrus had run out of words she got up and left the trio standing sheepishly whilst everyone about laughed at them. Then in a hurry they made their escape but not before Gargan had pulled a gray silk handkerchief from his pocket to wipe his brow.

Like a bolt from the blue recognition came home to me. "Good God!" I muttered, "Jones, my old servant."

I started from my seat suddenly to call after him and show him up. I was furious when I realized that he was degrading my country. Then as the hot words formed on my lips I heard a small voice whispering within, "Don't be so utterly petty. Live and let live." A moment longer I hesitated, indignant and wretched,

finally sitting down to feel utterly ashamed of myself.

What right had I to treat him so? Had he not fought beside me for three long years in France? Had we not waded together through shell torn fields of mud and stench and agony? How much had paltry ranks and titles meant in that great tragedy where we were all brothers, striving toward the same high goal? Good God! That last night when we had lain in the long deserted machine gun position in No Man's Land, and the shells rained down heaving and tearing great clouds of earth and mud, black against a firelit sky!

These thoughts came crowding upon me and a mad eagerness to meet him again urged me from my seat. I wanted once more to hold his hand in remembrance of Armageddon.

Eagerly I searched the board walk and the hot dog stands till the gray light of evening stole across sea and sky. No where could I find him and at last, tired and disconsolate I boarded a street car for Hollywood.

### A Heart of Gold

IT WAS two Sundays afterward that a friend invited me to drive to Crystal Pier. We found space for ourselves in the crowd, and were lounging comfortably when suddenly the people around us started up one after another pointing toward the end of the pier. Curiosity overcame me. I scrambled to my feet just in time to see a man dive into the heavy sea. It was a rough day and the swell was terrific. Then I heard shouts that someone was drowning.

I remembered wondering at the courage of the man to face such a sea. He certainly could not get far before he would be thrown back and dashed against the heavy supports. Why had he done it? Was he insane or trying to commit suicide? Every one was asking a thousand questions.

And now I saw a life guard's boat being rushed down the sands. Far out in the water black objects were bobbing. The boat, once in the surf pulled steadily but slowly toward them. Good Lord! I could see two heads rising and falling in the waves. An age seemed to pass, whilst the little boat pitched and tossed like a shell upon the big breakers. The men were losing ground.

Every one was now yelling around us and some of the women were crying. I was becoming intensely nervous and the inactivity, forced upon me, made me mad. So dense was the crowd that one could not lift an arm. Then after an age of waiting we saw the boat returning. Silence fell upon us all. Slowly, ever so slowly, it came through the surf, as a hundred willing hands dragged it up the sand.

### Compensation

OVER the craning heads in front of me I saw two life guards lifting the body of a woman, unconscious. I forced my way through and when the man who was working her arms stood aside for a minute I saw her face. It was the walrus. Then some one started asking for the man, and I heard, with the world swimming about me, the life guard saying,

"Poor fellow, he made a gallant attempt to save her. He went down for the third time as we took her from his hands. Major Gargan was sure game."

The tears were in his eyes and in those of a hundred others as I turned dazedly back to the crowd and walked away. "Good God! Poor old Jones!" I murmured over and over again to myself.

Near the boat house I stopped for a moment to light a cigarette, and, as I did so, heard a rough voice saying, "He wasn't no British officer. I tell you I knew him in England. His name wasn't Gargan, it was something else." I did not want to hear any more. Going up to the fellow, I said, "You're a liar. I fought with him in France as his servant for three years."



For a moment he looked intensely angry, and then, seeing that those standing round were in sympathy with me he turned on his heel and went away.

The crowd began to ask me questions and I repeated my story that I had known Major Gargan in the old country. It was the least I could do for this man who had proven his worth not to let his memory be stained by accusations of sham.

Major Gargan's body was never found, was destined to know no rest in the ceaseless turmoil of groaning seas. But his soul has surely passed into eternal peace in that world where only a brave and generous spirit can find a lasting habitation, and where sham and pretence—the very salt of our existence in this fleeting life are things unknown.

*I saw her face. It was the walrus*





# The WHIRLPOOL of HATE

*Intc which an innocent telegraph clerk becomes hideously involved, when she attempts to help a pretty little star to extricate herself from the evil influence of a fiend.*



*In that moment I bent forward and sunk my teeth into his wrist down to the bone.*

GRAY hair even on very young heads is not uncommon along the Pacific coast, so mine is quite inconspicuous and I can mention this bit of personal description without fear of revealing my identity.

Some blame the climate for fading, others the hard water, but mine started to change from golden brown to dull, lusterless white in a single night, one brief hour.

Brief according to the rapidly ticking counts of the clock but an eternity in Hades to my terrorized soul.

My occupation in life, that of telegraph operator, was innocent enough in itself and to all external evidence, well protected and uneventful. But who can tell when ten little words may prove utterly fatal—when they may wreck a home—cause a murder or—? But I am getting



ahead of my story. Had I but realized what they were to cost me, no power on earth could have made me take that telegram. As I counted them off and accepted a crisp bill to insure added secrecy little did I anticipate what was to follow. Never again will I burden my conscience with a paid promise, even to one who is my idol!

### Awful Experience

I HAVE kept my weird, awful experience locked in my heart but nagging at my soul so long that I have felt with increasing assurance that if I do not confess, if I do not share my knowledge and horrible responsibility with others—I shall go quite mad. This is my reason for unburdening my soul through the pages of *CONFESSIONS*: I must make amends as best I can by helping to solve another of those sickening mysteries of the police records, though protecting myself from public condemnation, or absolution, whichever it might prove to be.

When this appears in print, I shall be far away in a new land where I hope to forget that hour which cost me my youth and peace of mind. No one will ever know me, but like the sinner who has confessed and repented, I shall feel relieved, guiltless though I am of intended wrong doing.

It was on one of those semi-tropical spring afternoons in Southern California when everyone wants to lounge about and dream. Business is usually dull, and people are just waiting for the setting of the sun and the cool ocean breeze to refresh them. I had been sitting at my desk in the window of the telegraph office, giving the passers-by desultory glances.

Finding that the only point of interest on the avenue was an upper window in the office building across the street, I turned my attention there. Two men were lounging about, openly imbibing something from a big jug in the cabinet. I saw the one with his hat on take something out of his pocket and jab his arm. I was amazed at this brazen act so publicly done, and watched him in fascination as he took a small vial from his pocket to refill the hypodermic syringe. He found the vial empty and threw it across the room impatiently. His companion laughed and slapped him on the shoulder, evidently suggesting a remedy that proved temporarily sufficient and they went back to their drinking.

I turned away in disgust just as a magnificent car drew up at the curb and an exquisite girl stepped out. She has one of the sweetest personalities and is one of the most popular of all screen idols. Incidentally she is my favorite. In those days, when I first began to worship at her shrine, I often promised her autographed portrait that I would be glad to die for her if she would only light my day with one of her brilliant smiles. I did not realize then that it was just about what I should have to do if I lived up to my promises and my own sense of loyalty.

I had often heard rumors of this lovely star being entangled in some way with her former manager, who seemed to hold over her a hypnotic sway that threatened to ruin her career. No one knew just what this man did; but it was known that she paid him money at regular intervals. If she had any other men friends she kept the matter secret, knowing as she did the fiendish temper of this other man. Rumor had it that while on location the last time she had met a fine man; but his identity was as complete a mystery as that of the real murderer of William Desmond Taylor. Everyone sympathized with her and hoped that she would gather enough courage to break away from the manager.

When I heard her dictation of the telegram I knew she had reached the breaking point.

### Entrusted With a Secret

SHE smiled at me and asked if I'd be willing to keep secret her presence there, the contents of the telegram and above all the name and the address to which it was

sent. I assured her I would guard the message with my life, and with that she slipped a bill into my hand that was more than my whole week's salary. She was gone before I could tell her that I would be glad to do all she asked without pay.

I typed this message to a prominent man in a northern coast city.

"Can't stand it longer. Taking the risk. Meet tomorrow's Lark."

She had gone, and when I looked again across the street I saw that dreadful man staring out the window at the space where her car had just been as if he saw his life being drawn from him. Turning, he dashed out of the room.

Before I had collected my senses he was across the street and beside my desk. He scowled at me across the wooden gate of the office.

"Did that woman send a telegram?" he bit off each word angrily.

It flashed on me that I must be face to face with her Svengali manager. I intended to protect her from him, and so far I had the whole company back of me.

"It is against the rules to give such information," I replied.

He laughed mirthlessly.

"To whom did she send it?"

"I told you, sir, that it is absolutely against the rules of the company to give information concerning telegrams except when a court order is issued." I was still calm.

Evidently thinking to gain a point on another tack, he pulled out a roll of bills, but I drew back in contempt before the proffered bribe.

"See here, girlie," he snapped. "I want to know where that dame went and you're going to tell me!"

"You are quite mistaken," I insisted, pushing away the hand that offered money.

"Now see here, young lady, don't up-stage me, because it will go badly with you if you try to interfere. That girl's coming back, and she'll be sorrier than you will if you get mixed up in my affairs." He muttered to himself: "Thought I'd taught her a lesson last week."

### The Beginning of Fear

I T was getting time for my relief, and I hoped frantically that she would be early so that I might get away from this man. He seemed to sense my thoughts "So you won't tell, won't you? We'll see," he sneered "She used to say that too, but she soon got over it. And so will you, when I'm finished with you," and he turned on his heel and disappeared.

By this time I was getting uneasy. I had heard so many rumors of his cruelty to the star, and I knew he was capable of carrying out his threats.

Friends dropped in to take me home, and the unpleasant incident slipped my mind: until someone remarked that a big car had been following us home.

That night I went to a movie in which my little heroine was featured. All through the performance I wondered at her marvelous ability to show expressions of extreme fear and suffering. I was torn with sympathy for that poor girl, and filled with vague forebodings of trouble.

My girl friends left me at the gate. Oh, why in Heaven's name didn't I let them come in with me as they suggested? No sooner had I called to them that I was all right than two arms of steel gripped me, and my scream was choked before it could reach my lips.

A powerful motor purred softly in the darkness. Gagged and smothered in a huge robe, I was helpless to struggle against the man who held me with one arm as he drove the car. There was no hope of assistance. My presentiment had turned into a reality, how horrible I was yet to discover.



### In the Power of a Fiend

AFTER an interminable ride, the car stopped and I was lifted out, to be half dragged, half carried along a sand and gravel path for a hundred feet or so. I could hear the moan of the wind in tall trees and the soft gurgling of water somewhere.

Inside the house, he tumbled me into a chair and the rug fell away from my face. He pulled the gag from my mouth and stood me on my feet.

"Now if you know what is good for your health—tell me where in the devil she went?" His lips curled back from his teeth. I knew that I had to do with not only a fiend, but a maniac!

Before I could answer him, he continued:

"I didn't think she had the nerve to really beat it, but her bags and baggage are gone. She's skipped clean, even closed her bank account. Left me without even a supply of hop. She could get it, but—" his fury came back, and he shook me until my teeth chattered.

"Where'd she go, you stubborn, little she-demon, tell me, or by hell I'll have your heart's blood to pay for it!"

A sudden coolness came over me, and I faced him as calmly as if I had no fear.

"If you kill me, they'll hang you for it," I threatened.

Then he laughed, and I felt genuine fear.

"That's just what *she* told me the first time she tried to defy me. Come here," he opened a door leading out onto a broad veranda.

It was a weird, beautiful place. The waters of a wide creek, swollen by spring rains flowed right to the steps of the veranda and swished about the stone with a peculiar sucking noise that almost caused my heart to stop beating.

The moon had come out and I could see things clearly. Once more instinct—or something—warned me.

"Stay away from that edge!" he snarled.

What it was I could not imagine. I felt sure that the water was not deep enough to drown anyone. I was not kept in suspense for long. (Continued on page 92)



*She smiled at me and asked if I'd be willing to keep the telegram a complete secret.*



# LOVE MADNESS

*Another proof that oil and water  
cannot mix.*



*"An odd ring you have there," Mose commented, and idly toyed with the filagree carving.  
Bang! A flashlight explosion startled the diners*

ARREST FOR SPEEDING LIKELY TO END  
IN SENTENCE FOR LETA GORHAM.

LETA GORHAM stared at the newspaper and scowled angrily. Why does one, she asked herself, have to see horrid things written about one merely because one is in the movies?

Rotten. And silly. That's what it was.

"Damn!" she said, giving vent to her innermost feelings. Then she felt better. Strange, isn't it, how such an outburst will relieve one's temper?

Seated there on the low divan, morning sunlight streaming over her in a single ray filtered through a half-drawn blind, Leta Gorham at least *looked* lovely. Unusually so. Delicately-moulded features. Lustrous eyes. All the exquisite delicacy of a Champeve figurine.

The very type to screen well. Ripe. Luscious. Created to inspire sympathy or desire or mediaeval love. Anger had tinged her cheeks an ever so elusive pink, like the blush that steals across the waxen petals of a hothouse rose.

And, as she laid down her paper with a little gesture of hopelessness, it occurred to Virginia Carle, her friend,

that Leta on the front page was as incongruous as a white feather in a porcupine.

"But," she said soothingly, "that was a great stunt they pulled this morning. A knockout."

"It . . . was . . . silly!" Leta hovered on the verge of tears. "It was the most foolish thing they've ever done. What'll people say, anyhow, to such a yarn?"

"They'll say it's good publicity. Weren't you arrested?"

"Certainly! I got out of it though. But the studio had to get hold of the whole story, puff it up and rush it into print. Next time that officer sees me he'll nab me just because he'll think I tried to make a fool out of him!"

"Well?"

"And that's not all. Gordon has been calling here like mad all morning!"

"Oh!" Now Virginia could see why Leta was annoyed. Could understand everything.

Gordon Moore. Yes, that was it! Gordon,—or, rather, his family,—didn't approve of such things.

He was *such* a nice chap. . . good-looking. . . in society. . .

Leta sensed her thought-wave.

"His people can't understand that sort of thing," she



explained. "Not being in the profession, they're apt to believe everything they hear about one of us. I wouldn't have Gordon think wrong of me for anything!"

At that, Leta's contact with the world had been comparatively slight. One could readily see that. But Virginia was different. More seasoned. A trifle harder. Some of Leta's views made her smile.

"I think you're in love," she teased.

"Perhaps. I don't know."

"Have the Moores money?" the older girl inquired archly. Leta nodded.

"Well," and Virginia laughed lightly. "That makes it unanimous. When money comes in through the door love flies in through the window."

"Sort of rewriting the proverb?"

"Oh, no, my dear. Only it's all in the point of view. You're an actress. So am I. The world expects a lot of weird things from us. We have to be expensive."

Leta sighed. "But I don't want my reputation ruined."

"Oh, calm yourself." And Virginia leaned far forward. "Virtue is *passé*. Let 'em think you're bad if they want to. Then they'll remember you. No one gives a whoop about angels any more. You might as well get to be famous while the gettin's good, old girl. You're dead a long time."

Such a peculiar philosophy, thought Leta. Incomprehensible. Nor did she want to understand it.

Her mind seemed centered almost wholly upon what Gordon would think of her "escapade." His opinion was the only one that mattered. Of all the men she'd met in Hollywood he was the only one who interested her. The rest were just ordinary, or stupid,—or *blaa*.

Nor was he the type of chap in whom she should be interested and when her thoughts wandered to him she felt a sharp little pang of regret. They were so different, he and she. Their lives were built along wholly separate lines.

The thought hurt her.

Virginia couldn't understand him. Few, if any of the girls at the studio could. They'd see his canary-colored sportster standing outside the front gate waiting for her, and tell her how good-looking he was and all that.

Some of them even went so far as to try to meet him, but their advances had received only utter politeness and indifference. Inwardly, she was flattered.

Now, as her friend philosophized, as if by a magnet she felt her glance being drawn to the door. What she saw there frightened her. She wished Virginia's endless chatter could be suddenly cut off.

For, on the threshold stood Gordon Moore, attired in golf tweeds. In his hand he held his cap, and his light, grey eyes blazed dangerously.

### Love's Young Dream

IT was quite as Leta feared. A terrific scene. Thank heavens Virginia had had sufficient presence-of-mind to excuse herself; Leta would never have wanted her to hear the things Gordon said.

She had never seen him so angry. "Good Lord, Leta," he declared with proper emphasis, "isn't it bad enough, your associating with mediocre persons like that Carle girl without getting yourself into disgraceful scrapes? Your life is becoming a public mockery."

"Well," replied the girl hotly, "why is it then that you choose me as the object of so much attention? Why do so many chaps of your type seek out actresses? Why aren't you content with girls of your own class,—petty-minded butterflies who haven't sufficient beauty or brains to make their own way?"

"My dear," he said more calmly, "it's only because I love you that I talk like this to you. I have faith in you. You have everything the other girls I know haven't. I . . . I . . ."

He groped for an expression, but, finding none, took a step closer to her.

How exquisite she was! How fragile! A rose bloomed in her blood and shadowed her cheeks. Like the petals of a delicate, rare flower her lips were parted. They trembled ever so slightly.

A south wind of passion swept over him and stirred him. He took her in his arms and showered her mouth with kisses. . . .

A momentary protest. A trembling resistance that was almost a figment of the imagination. But, like the passing of a breeze, it was gone, vanquished by the more poignant realization of love's coming of age.

She was non-resisting in his arms, and he kissed her again. . . . and again.

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Summer. A succession of work-filled days and balmy, warm-cool evenings with Gordon. Evenings that titillated her senses. Stimulated her. Made the very world itself seem oblivious.

Each day more glorious than its predecessor. Each fleeting hour more marvelous.

Long, dream-filled, star-lit drives far out into the open country or through the purple sage-hills. Myriad happy hours squandered languorously with this sun-bronzed man-person whose voice was so soft, whose manners were so mild, whose touch was so tender.

A new elysium, Leta told herself like a phoenix, emerging from her own heart's fire with plumage more brightened, more brilliant than ever before.

Gossip, Hollywood-fashion. People beginning to whisper of orange blossoms and church bells and other impedimenta of nuptials. Some girls even going so far as to imagine themselves cup-bearers in the wedding entourage.

But, to Leta and Gordon themselves, such notions were haze-like and indefinite. Leta hating pomp, Gordon wishing simplicity,—utter simplicity.

Yes, *their* wedding would be quiet, unattended by notoriety. A mere joining of the hands. The rendition of a cloistered ceremony wherein he would breathe the words,

" . . . to love, honor and cherish until death do us part. . . ."

That would be all. The very quietude of the whole thing making its solemnity, its sacredness, only more apparent.

He had forgotten that he was Gordon Moore, son of a "first family," and she that she was Leta Gorham, the movie star. They remained simply as two people in love. As Pygmalion and Galatea. . . as Man and Woman. . . not as two individuals of vastly different spheres.

### The Gods Decree!

AT the studio. Hubbub. Commotion. A general reorganization. Nerve-racking details. Changes. Uprootings.

Complaints about something being wrong, lacking, in Super-Art's pictures. Exhibitors' complaints.

Something had to be done.

A staff conference presided over by Eddie Erskine, the general manager. Fat, be-diamonded, pompous Eddie Erskine. Important Mr. Erskine.

"Look at Leta Gorham," he said. "She's a wiz of an actress. A go-getter. One of our big sellers. But her stuff's all wrong. Too slow."

Heads,—a score of them,—nodded in approval.

"Gorham's our best bet. Give her gowns, directors, stories. *Stories!* That's what she needs. Risky stuff. What Viola Dana can get away with Leta'll eat up! You gotta spend money to make money. Eh?"

Agreed. Unanimously agreed.

And thus was the future of Miss Gorham singularly decided for her unknown to the young lady herself.

It was a comparatively short time later that she lay on the wide, overstuffed chaise longue in her apartment.



looking over the new story just given her. Wonderment in her face. Then annoyance.

Was this what they were expecting her to play in? Surely not a rather smutty French farce. She could never visualize herself its heroine.

Impatiently she flung the thing aside and reached for the telephone. A mistake certainly, she thought, and mentally censured office boys and other stupid people who make errors in handling one's personal belongings such as scripts and things.

The new policy of the studio sickened, hurt, angered her. Eddie Erskine telling her she was to be made over into a "flapper-vamp." Preposterous!

It was impossible for her to get any satisfaction from this porky, domineering person who seemingly had so much to say about her career.

Virginia's words rang in her ears. . .

The movies. . . machine-made things. . . certain distress for high-minded people who would rather see Leta Gorham as a sweet-womanly girl than an odious flapper-vamp.

Rebellion. And temper. And her soul's own refusal to make the change.

"I'll show him!" she muttered, teeth clenched.

During that period in which she became transformed from a fluffy puffball in negligee into a matter-of-fact, Diana-like being prepared for the worst in motoring, the thought of her film company's impudence kept growing within her.

"I'll show them!" she murmured to herself. "I'll even go so far as to break my contract."

The movies. . . pooh! She was through with them. Of that she felt certain.

With the last of her toilette completed, she paused an instant to survey herself in a pier-glass. Yes. . . Leta Gorham,—this Leta Gorham,—was a new person. A woman of will and decision. Not a frail little putty thing that people could mould at will.

The telephone's faint tinkle sounded from another room, and in a moment Juie, the Chinese maid, mentioned Gordon's name, telling her that he was calling her.

This was no time for sentiment, she reminded herself quickly.

"Tell him to call later," she said brusquely, and, turning on her heel, sped out of the door.

## A Little Matter of Temper

IT was useless for Gordon to try to "pump" the celestial as to her mistress' whereabouts. The girl said nothing. Knew less.

The memory of her words angered him. Why should Leta leave any such message for him? He couldn't understand. Only the night before he had dined with her in a soft-lighted nook at The Plantation and she had somewhat extravagantly declared her love for him.

Could it be that she was merely playing with him. . . flattering herself that she'd made a "catch". . . flaunting him simply to gratify a certain vanity of hers?

It maddened him, this thought, and gave him a peculiar feeling that he'd like to kill somebody.

If anybody had told him that he was jealous he would have roared. Jealousy, nothing! No woman could make him jealous,—and, besides, Hollywood was full of attractive actresses if he chose to run around with them.

"Damnation!" he finally said, thus endeavoring to shelve the matter and relegate Leta to her proper woman's place in his mind.

Miles out into the low, rolling country he drove toward the country club, the cupped tires of his car singing a monotonous, whizz-z-zing song not unlike the hum of a beehive, that soothed his nerves and tended to make his thoughts wander.

There they were at the club, ready for golf. His

accustomed crowd. His friends. His father's friends.

Usually, of late, the thought of them had rather bored him and in each of the girls and gay young matrons he had been able to detect largely the lack of those various qualities of charm so poignantly characteristic of Leta Gorham.

He rarely brought her to the golf course, whose people amused her and whose game bored her. She had once remarked that she failed to derive enjoyment from the mere labor of chasing a small, white, bounding ball over endless grassy spaces.

## A Man's Woman

HOWDY, Gord!"

A voice deep, bassoon-like, belonging to Gwendolyn Gaylord, a muscular, heavy-shouldered young woman with a complexion completely remodeled through its contact with blistering sun and withering wind.

Gwen, the woman's champion. The Samson-like exponent of exercise, suffrage and "knickers."

Her vocal calisthenics resembled a well-developed factory whistle at low baritone pitch. When she walked she strode manfully. And, reflected Gordon, when she danced *she danced*,—somewhat after the manner of a powerful camel-back locomotive hauling a heavy freight up-grade.

In other words, Gwen was *some* girl! All athletics and a ton wide.

And, moreover she seemingly had a peculiarly friendly feeling toward Gordon. A feeling which instantly prompted her to desert all other issues to engage him in conversation or golf or whatever other what-not that might occur to her.

Frankly, she had always more or less awed,—or frightened—Gordon. She was so omniscient, so enveloping, so completely devastating with her amazonishness.

He greeted her decorously.

"Game?" she inquired bluntly, shifting the weight of her clubs to another shoulder.

"Headache," responded the defendant, accustomed, apparently, to her monosyllables.

"Tough!" she answered with all the sympathy of a young ocean wave. "Drink?" And, squinting, she reached in a vest pocket and produced a man's-size flask.

"Thanks," said Gordon with a faint smile, accepting the offer.

This morning Gwen's odd, ponderous personality, her one-word method of conversation, rather appealed to him and he projected no excuse when she led him out across the links to a bunker set in the midst of a group of trees.

Of course, she asked him all about Leta, whom she called "the movie queen," an appellation that made Gordon bristle.

"Not taking her seriously?" she inquired brashly. In reply, he remained stubbornly silent and dabbed at the turf with a mashie.

There was something, to Gwen after all, that was quite interesting, Gordon reflected. Not a great sex appeal or girlish grace, he told himself. Yet, on the other hand, she *did* belong to his "set" and was, in social circles, considerably celebrated.

His mother had very openly expressed her unqualified approbation of this girl. Gwen was so wholesome! And the very fact that she came of a long line of steel barons made her all the more eligible.

Strange, that Gordon should feel so suddenly reminded of her good qualities,—and yet he even found himself reviewing rather than rejecting them. . .

## Nasty Complications

CONSIDERABLY later in the afternoon Gordon found himself being driven homewards in his own car by the masterful Gwen, who had delicately appro-



priated the chauffeur's seat on the pretense that her own roadster was laid up for repairs.

Marvelous how competent she was. She could drive as surely, as swiftly, as a professional racer. Her mode of swerving through heavy traffic on the beach road fascinated him.

If Leta could only see him now!

"Come over for dinner tonight?" Gwen's boom precipitately broke his reverie.

"Can't," he rejoined half apologetically. "Previous engagement."

She turned toward him bullishly.

"Bum sport!" she ejaculated. "You used to be glad of the chance."

She seemed angered. Her mouth was set in a tight, hard line, and she drew her breath in a series of windy snorts.

"Look here, Gord," she said determinedly. "You're getting to be a disgrace. Everybody's talking."

"So?" blandly.

"I've made up my mind to break up this affair of yours if I have to break your neck! You used to be so careful of the people you knew. Now you don't care."

"You wouldn't understand, Gwen."

He smiled to himself in memory of Leta and her curt morning's dismissal.

"Don't want to." She said perfunctorily. "Kiss me."

Quite obediently he did as he was told. It was useless to resist Gwen once she had made up her mind, as she had evidently done. It would be like pitting one's fragile human strength against the onrush of a juggernaut.

It suddenly occurred to Gordon that they were nearing the street on which Leta lived, and quite as suddenly he felt that he wished to drive past her house.

Up a wide side-street whose curbs were flanked with cocos, palms, and the lawns of whose houses were wide and like green panne velvet, they drove. In front of a pale, whitestone flat building stood a car,—a pretentious low-built thing with long, squatty lines.

In front of Leta's place, by Gad! Gordon fixed his eyes on the machine. It looked familiar.

"See the place you wanted?" inquired Gwen from her station at the wheel.

"Hell, no!" Gordon snapped, of a sudden engulfed in a blinding fury. Gwen snorted, and looked at him quickly.

His face was flushed. He was biting his lips and his eyes flashed angrily.

"Damn him!" he muttered under his breath.

*A wave of passion swept over him. He took her in his arms and showered her mouth with kisses*





For he had recognized the car, and remembered its middle-aged owner, an uncouth fellow whom he had once met at the studio on Leta's "set" whence he had gone to pay her a visit.

"Pull up to the curb, please, and let me take the wheel, Gwen," he almost commanded, and, with a stare of amazement, the golf champ threw out the clutch and slid dumbly out from behind the wheel.

"Hey, there!" cautioned Gwen deeply as he stepped on the gas, but found herself unheeded as Gordon, turning into Wilshire, tore furiously down the broad, glass-like boulevard in the direction of the Gaylord home.

"Sorry, Gwen, but I've just remembered a date I'd forgotten," he lied, as he pulled the car to a stop in front of her home.

She seemed inclined to detain him, but he cut her short.

"I've got to be at the train. Andy Stennard's leaving for the north and I've got an important paper of his. You'll have to excuse me till later," he said with finality.

None too gracefully, she emptied herself out of the motor. "Give us a buzz when you haven't got such an important paper of Andy's," sarcastically.

Gordon was too infuriated to remember just *what* she said. A rumble. A roar. The car whirling around the corner. Back toward Leta's. Breakneck speed.

He could see the low-built, rakish car still standing where he had noticed it a few moments before. A mad desire to drive headlong into the hideous thing—to smash it to bits—struck him, but, more rationally, he instead pulled up behind it and parked.

Mose Simon daring to go near Leta! Mose Simon with his reputation! That crude, fat brute with his ugly little pig eyes, his hooked nose and his thick, beefsteak lips!

What did she mean by allowing him such freedom? If the front door were locked he'd break it down. If . . . if . . . !

But he was spared more mental threatening by discovering the portal unbarred.

Noisily he pushed it open and started into the house. Upstairs he could hear music. A victrola. And also the sound of a man's voice.

Through the open French doors he could see Leta winding the phonograph, her back toward him. Simon evidently felt very much at home. He sat on a divan, legs outstretched, smoking a long, black cigar. Near at hand were glasses and a siphon.

Glasses for two! Leta *drinking* with this man! Eyes snapping, fists clenched, Gordon took another step and was in the room. Momentarily he stood silently surveying the situation.

"Gordon!" cried Leta, startled. He meant to say something, but felt his very rage choking him and keeping him speechless. Awkwardly gathering his legs together, Mose Simon arose slowly from the divan, and Leta, in a quandary, stood silently looking first from one to the other.

"Gordon . . . Mr. Moore . . . I want you to meet Mr. Simon," she stammered.

Gordon replied with a curt nod and a quick, angry flash of his eyes, but the older man seemed unaware of any storm clouds. "How do you do, young man?" he drawled good-naturedly.

"Anything I resent is being called young man," Gordon replied tersely.

"Well, old chap, then?" smiled Simon, but Leta interrupted.

"See here, Gordon, what does this mean?" she said, half angrily. "Why all the fireworks?"

Hands on her hips, her head thrown back, a slight flush in her cheeks, she stood poised and high-strung, her being imbued with what the French term *esprit*.

"What do you mean?" blurted Gordon. "Have you lost your senses? And what are you doing here, lolling

on Miss Gorham's divan and drinking cocktails, Mister, . . . Mister Simon?"

The latter laughed. A deep-throated, guttural sound, it was like the gurgle of an emptying tankard.

"I won't stand for this!" cried Gordon, dramatically, clenching his fists and taking a step forward, but Leta's silvery laugh rippled out mischievously.

"He thinks he's in the movies, Mr. Simon," she gurgled. "Really, Gordon, your theatrical instinct is perfect." Then her tone changed. "What right have you bursting into my house like a mad bull and trying to insult me?"

"You . . . you . . ."

But she interrupted quickly. "As we were saying, Mr. Simon, when we were so rudely broken in upon,—I, I shall be very happy to dine with you Tuesday evening. It is kind of you to ask me."

"You'll do nothing of the sort!" Gordon fairly bel-  
lowed, and Leta made a little motion with her hands as if to shut the noise out of her ears.

"Really, Mr. Simon, Mr. Moore is quite funny this afternoon," she said bitingly. "I am afraid you'll have to excuse us, Gordon, Mr. Simon and I have some very important business to transact. I hope you can find your way safely out?"

And, turning away, she returned to the victrola and started it again.

What a complex! At the moment Gordon could never remember having before been placed in such a position. Already he felt cheapened and chastened.

"Leta," he ventured in a lowered tone, "I . . ."

"You really *must* excuse us!" she retorted a bit haughtily. "Good afternoon."

Without a word he turned with almost military stiffness and left the room.

## A Boomerang

THERE he is. . . over there behind that palm. . . with, with Leta Gorham, by gad!"

The homely little woman in a loose, spangled gown leaned far forward and peered in the direction of her escort's pointed finger.

No mistaking it. There he was,—Mose Simon with Leta Gorham and in the very public Coconut Grove!

How attractive the actress was with her vivid youth and rose-like coloring and beautiful clothes!

It stung the observer, with her painful, scorching henna hair, her wrinkles and her claw-like, sharp hands.

"That's what I've been wanting to see for a long time. Mr. Jarro," she said in a harsh, nasal voice. "The dance that man's led me has been terrible,—but I've never caught him before. Sinning in public! That's Mose Simon all over,—an' I'll get him yet!"

Jarro, the escort, bulged. It was dashed clever, he admitted to himself, the way in which he had arranged matters. The notoriety he would get out of the tangle would establish him as a very enviable sort of person,—a society detective. Just what he wished.

"Everything is all right, eh?" demanded Mrs. Mose Simon,—for the orange-haired Medusa was none other.

"All set! Tomorrow morning your husband will be sorry for everything he has done to you, dear lady."

"He oughta be, but he won't be," she averred.

Though she wouldn't confess it Leta had a headache. And her mind kept wandering too far away for her to hear the varied things old Mose Simon kept saying to her.

He was nice,—very nice. Intelligent, and all that. But what an inveterate talker!

If she could only bring the evening to a quick close! If, . . . if, . . . but *that* was impossible. She kept thinking of Gordon.

"They're simply killing me at the studio," she at length said. "My new picture is the most tedious thing



I've ever done. It was supposed to be naughty, but after the scenario department got through with it there wasn't enough left to be interesting."

Simon nodded. "That's usually the way, isn't it? Well, it's all in the day's work. You were foolish to sign the contract you did. It binds you completely."

"Without giving me anything in return!" Her tone changed, softened. Pensively she examined a fingernail. "Do you know, Mr. Simon, I'm really terribly tired of pictures. They're so monotonous."

"Yes?" he echoed.

"Awfully so! I should like,—oh, so well—to have my own home. A husband . . . babies, perhaps. Every woman wants that no matter who she is or what her life may be."

She sighed deeply but quickly recovered herself. Simon leaned far across the table toward her and patted her hand gently . . .

There was a gasp at another table across the room and a hennaed woman in a black spangled gown bit her lips tensely at what she saw. Now was the time, surely!

. . . "My dear Miss Gorham," said Simon, kindly "that happiness is sure to come to you. Soon, I hope."

One of her hands rested lightly atop the table. Taking it, Mose commenced toying with one of its rings. Tracing the outline of its filagree. Patting it. Sitting, apparently absorbed in a reverie of his own.

Bang!!!

A muffled, half-deafening explosion. A sickening reverberation like the far-away discharge of a big gun. A woman's scream. Then a dense, choking cloud of thick, dry, odorous blue smoke that filled the atmosphere

and seemed, even, to ooze into the pores of one's skin.

Simon jumped up quickly from the table. Leta frightened,—sickeningly so.

"It's nothing, Miss Gorham,—nothing!" he assured her calmly. "Only a flashlight. See, there goes the photographer through those curtains!"

"Let's go,—please!" she urged. She felt so unnerved, so uncannily weak from the shock.

"Quite right," he agreed and assisted her with her wrap.

She walked slowly, somewhat unsteadily. She'd been working too hard lately, she told herself. Her nerves were in a horrible condition.

It was foolish, too, to be frightened by a mere, harmless flashlight.

But, in the face of the man with her there was a line of worry, a deep wrinkle of concern. He could catch a glimpse of someone in a black spangled dress leaving the room. The dress looked familiar.

He felt disinclined to talk.

### The Reason For It All

SHE did quite the right thing . . . Yes, Leta Gorham was a very clever girl!

But, at the same time, people talked. Talked unmercifully. Never saying things she could hear directly, yet slashing, slashing, slashing at her with their sharp, forked tongues until, at times, she felt utterly degraded, utterly despondent.

Ugly things, these sayings. Even indulged in by her friends. She'd heard some of them. (Cont'd on page 95)

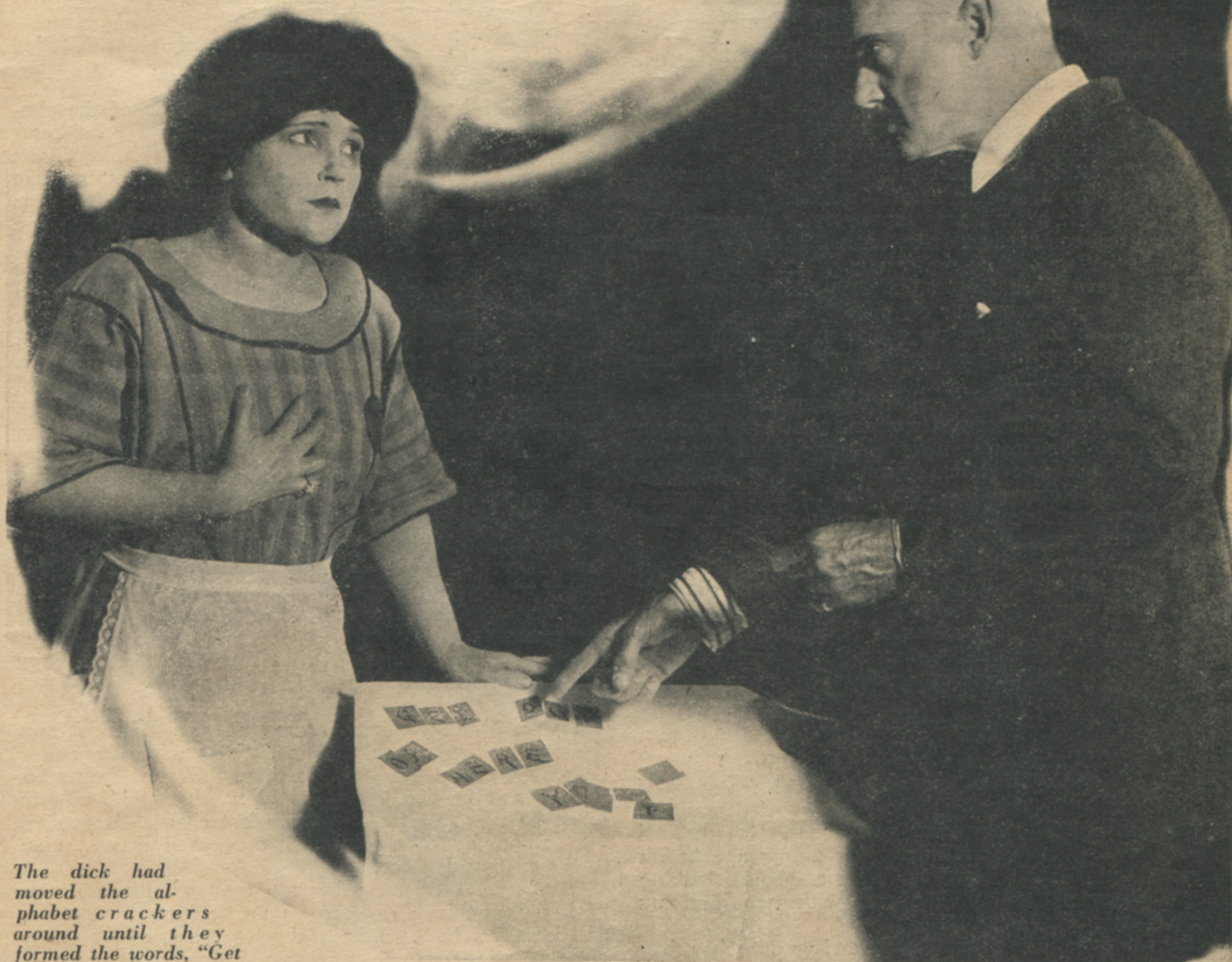
*"What are you doing here?" blurted Gordon, mad with jealousy*





# The GRANDE DAME KLEPTOMANIAC

*In "the good old days" when studios trust-  
fully left their properties unguarded, the  
ladies and gentlemen of the light-fin-  
gered fraternity had easy pickings.*



*The dick had  
moved the al-  
phabet crackers  
around until they  
formed the words, "Get  
out of here, you fake."*

THREE years ago I resided on Buena Vista Street in Los Angeles. Buena Vista—"beautiful view"—naturally conjures visions of rolling hills, orange groves and sunkissed pink roofs. As a matter of fact, from the Buena Vista Street where I lived, there isn't a sight of landscape. You see the read walls of the county court house across the street, and the gray walls of the post-office from the rear windows. You see, I was housed in the Los Angeles County Jail.

It's all my own stupid fault that I got caught in the meshes of the law. I suppose all who ever languished in this same jail scold themselves just as I did. There is always something we shouldn't have done at a particular time. A lamp with a rose shade got me into trouble.

Four years ago, I began to work in moving pictures.

In the beginning, I had a few little parts but almost always I was called for extra work. However, the latter was the most profitable for it meant that there was to be a crowd on the set. If anything in the way of props disappeared, it was hard to know whom to accuse. My glorious white hair—I'm a grande dame type—and my air of social well being and refinement kept anyone from having the slightest suspicion of me.

At the time I began playing in pictures, the studios never knew how many Louis XV chairs they had in the prop room, or how many oil paintings they owned or how many evening gowns hung in the wardrobe. They took an inventory every so often, but the studio heads were always firing the production manager and getting a new one. When the new man came he'd bring a flock



of friends with him to fill the studio jobs, and the old crew got yellow slips. With each change of regime, there were new inventories but a lot of stuff managed to disappear.

### Dead Easy

YOU see how dead easy it was. One day I was called to play a guest at a reception. One of the Japanese prints the prop man had hung on the wall appealed to me. After the day's work was over, and the other players were in their dressing-rooms taking off make-up, I went back to the set. If anyone had spotted me and asked what I was doing there, I would have said I was looking for a lost handkerchief. In this manner, I acquired some lovely antiques, etchings, a clock and some satsuma vases for my bungalow in Hollywood. The studios were wasting money in dozens of different directions, and we extra people only made \$3 or \$5 a day at that time. I've always simply had to have luxuries, and my conscience rarely gives me any trouble.

We went to some handsome homes in Beverly Hills occasionally to take scenes. The owners usually let us use the lawns and the rose gardens, but they weren't so keen about letting us wander inside the house. However, I made my way into a big English mansion one day, and managed to lift a handsome tapestry. It was small of course, or I could never have tucked it in my blouse; just as I had it out of sight, a maid suddenly bobbed up. She gave me a fright, but first and foremost I'm an actress, so I reached for my purse.

"Thank you for letting me glance into your mirrors," I said and tipping her generously, swept out of the room in aristocratic fashion.

One night I was eating dinner down at Hoffman's Café in Los Angeles with a woman friend who plays in pictures too. Hoffman's, in the old days, used to be the gathering place for everyone of importance in films. We were sipping clover-club cocktails and glancing around the room when Genevieve kicked my foot and motioned to three men just entering.

"Isn't that first man *distingué*?" exclaimed Genevieve. She always crowds in a French word whenever she can.

"I should say so!" I agreed. "Altogether too much so for you, Jenny," I commented inwardly. Genevieve puts on too much street make-up and her ear-rings and feathers make her very conspicuous.

### A New Interest—with Gray Hair

OUR new interest was a man of forty-five, I should say, with iron gray hair and classical features—if you know what I mean. He bore a sort of determined air as if he were fighting for a principle. I wondered what it was. The idea of marrying at my age hadn't occurred to me until I saw him. What a splendid looking couple we would make. He was with two directors whom I knew very slightly.

"Let's dilly-dally over our dessert and go out when they do," whispered Genevieve. "Maybe we can manage an introduction." Genevieve had been staring at them steadily for twenty minutes. Some women go about their courting so boldly!

"I'll use Terry," I said. "Let me manage it." Terry is my dog and obeys beautifully.

When they went out, we followed. I got Terry from the check boy. Out on the sidewalk, it took only one signal for Terry presumably to leap from my grasp and begin nipping at the ankles of the three gentlemen. Of course, we were covered with confusion and profuse in our apologies, but it certainly brought the desired result. We were introduced.

"This is Louis Zeitman," said one of the directors. "He's just come out from New York to be efficiency man at the Continental Studio," he explained. Efficiency man! I had never heard of that job before in pictures.

"And what does that mean?" Genevieve burst forth. She never attempts to hide her ignorance.

"He has a new scheme for helping picture companies save money," they said. "First he'll make an inventory of every vase, chair, picture and costume the studio owns. Then when some of these are to be used on a set, his assistant makes a list, and they have all got to be returned to the prop room when the scene is over or there will be H—— to 'pay.'"

This surely had been a lucky meeting—for me. It gave me advance tip to be wary. How fatal it would have been if the new efficiency department had caught me "borrowing" a sofa cushion from the set. The thought even occurred to me that they might watch the studio gate after this and search cars. I had always smiled sweetly at the gate-man as I sailed forth with my Ford full of plunder. Were the old days of easy affluence over?

### Wholesale Studio Theft

"YES, I have just gone over the books of the purchasing department of the Continental Film Company," said Mr. Zeitman, "and compared them with the last inventory of props and costumes. Something like \$60,000 worth of furniture, props and valuable goods belonging to the studio disappeared last year and no one seems to know where they have gone."

I gasped. Someone else had beaten me to it. Other extras or electricians or somebody had taken more than I had. What a piker I had been, for I don't believe I had confiscated more than \$500 worth of stuff myself.

I expressed horror at such thievery, and told Mr. Zeitman if he was a stranger in California I should love to have him call. He wrote down my address, saying he had to go to San Francisco for a few days but would surely give me a ring when he returned.

When a woman of my age thinks of a fourth leap into matrimony, she must make her background sufficiently attractive and homey. I had bought my tiny little bungalow with the money the court allowed me after my last divorce, but it certainly needed more furniture. There were gaps all around the living-room. That evening, the Continental Studio told me to report for work the next day.

"Sport clothes," said the casting director. "We're going somewhere to do some outdoor stuff." I told him I would be there at eight.

Then a brilliant scheme occurred to me. Mr. Zeitman, the new efficiency man, was in San Francisco for a few days. He hadn't yet begun to count things at the studio. Wouldn't it be dandy if I could snitch some furniture while he was gone? It was my last chance. I puzzled for an hour as to how to put it over, then phoned again to the casting director.

"Tommy," I began, using my most winning manner, "I know just how rushed you are looking for players and locations both. I have a pretty yard, and I gladly offer it any time the Continental Company wants to come down here and do scenes. If they ever did, I determined to tie down everything in the house, else someone would lift some of the treasures that I had taken such a risk to obtain.

"You've certainly helped me out of a jam," answered Tommy. "Director Ray wants to use 50 people in a garden scene early tomorrow and I am so busy phoning the people that I don't know where in Sam Hill I'll send them when they come. Would you care if we brought down about 15 wicker tables and 3 dozen wicker chairs for your lawn?"

### Furnishing the Bungalow

I PINCHED myself to realize my good luck. "I should say not, Tommy. Send the stuff down early." "I'll do it. The trucks will be down by eight."



Of course, I had a little disagreement with the studio truck driver after we finished the scenes about dusk. He was quite sure of the number of tables and chairs he had brought down, but I pointed out to him quite clearly that three of the chairs and one table were my own, regardless of the fact that they resembled the Continental Studio stuff. Wicker is wicker, and how could I help it if they had all come from the same wholesale house and were alike?

*"She's a charming, sweet lady," broke in Zeitman.  
"You're fired!"*





With that acquisition, my house began to look quite presentable and I awaited the return of Mr. Zeitman with the fluttering heart of a young girl. Of course, the first few days after he returned to the studio, he was very busy. I saw him making itemized lists of things and checking up goods wherever I went about the studio. They counted every butter-dish on the dining tables, every little mat, every blossom in vases of artificial flowers. While this high powered counting was going on, I had no inclination to touch anything.

"My, don't you look handsome!" commented Mr. Zeitman the first evening he called. My hair was marvelled and dressed high, most becomingly. I wore an evening gown, as if I always dressed for dinner. We had a very pleasant evening. He talked about big hotels and the New York shows and travel in "furrin parts" to such an extent that I realized I must put on an air of prosperity to make any sort of impression. I explained that I just played in pictures for the fun of the experience, and he said he thoroughly understood that and hadn't criticized me in his own mind for doing it at all. Some wonderful imitations of precious stones and jewelry which I found in a small shop, helped to put over an effect of prosperity.

He took me to the theater several times, and things were getting along famously, when two new faces appeared on the Continental lot. They were engaged to assist Mr. Zeitman in his efficiency work. I almost jumped out of my evening slippers when one of them strolled out on a ball-room set one day. I recognized him instantly. He used to be a detective in Chicago when I got into that little misunderstanding with the police about the sealskin coat.

I pretended I didn't know him at all. He stood on the edge of the set almost all day, and made me very nervous by smiling at me in a cynical sort of way. The following morning I was cast as a housekeeper in a nursery scene. The director used a dozen children. There wasn't a thing in the set worth lifting, but the dick hung around a long time. Finally, he began to fuss with a box of alphabet crackers that the children had been using. I just thought I would call his bluff.

"You're too old to be playing with baby crackers," I said, as if I were in a pleasant kidding mood and didn't recognize him at all.

"No, I like to write words with them," he replied, giving me a hard look. I glanced down at the nursery table. He had moved those alphabet crackers around until they formed the words, "Get out of here, you fake." It gave me a nervous shock but I laughed joyously as if he were very funny, then slipped through the scenery and over to Louis Zeitman's office. Fortunately, he was alone.

### The Sympathy Stuff

"WHAT can possibly be the trouble?" he asked, as I began to cry and press his arm with my hands. He was most sympathetic.

"Your assistant—that new man with freckles and red hair. He has been hanging around my set for two days and tries to talk with me and make a date. His very manner is an insult." I could see that Mr. Zeitman believed every word I said. He sent for the ex-dick with the freckles.

"You've been wasting time hanging about the sets!" he challenged.

"This woman—" began the dick, while I froze him with a glance.

"She's a charming, sweet lady," broke in Zeitman. "You're fired!" The dick didn't have a chance to say another word. I kissed Mr. Zeitman's cheek in an appreciative fashion. He seemed very much affected by the kiss, and sent me home in his own big car, saying he would call later to take me to dinner.

In the next six months, I ran a wonderful bluff. I delicately put it over to Mr. Zeitman that my last husband had left me very—yes, very, very—comfortably well off. Being an efficiency man and financier, this interested him exceedingly. I rode everywhere in a taxi—because I had had to sell my Ford one morning when a collector from a dress shop became too insistent. I told the taxi people I was a well known legitimate stage actress, recently come out from New York to play in pictures and that I wanted to run a charge account all the time. My fake jewelry helped to put that over. Besides, I charged my gowns and charged all the work at my beauty shop. I borrowed a ten here and a five there, whenever I spotted a friendly face which weakened under my appealing request for a short time loan. My prosperity and my charming manner evidently impressed Mr. Zeitman. I felt sure only a few more evenings were necessary to make him propose.

### The Telltale Lamp

AND now comes the lamp with the rose shade. I saw it on a set at the Monarch Studio. It was a beautifully carved little thing, with a shade that threw the most seductive light. I felt sure that with a lamp like that on the wicker table in my bungalow, Mr. Zeitman would propose. The Monarch Studio had no efficiency man.

I had rented Terry, my little dog, to the Monarch people for the day. After we were through with our scenes, I tied him to a piece of scenery, telling a stage hand that I would come back for him when my make-up was removed. I phoned for my taxi-man, telling him to drive right into the studio gate and near the dressing-rooms, which he did. Then I threw a drapery over the lamp, and put it and Terry into the taxi and drove home. It was a luscious lamp. Its soft light must have dulled all Mr. Zeitman's senses, for he proposed just as I had hoped.

For a week, nothing happened to ruffle the smooth happiness of my existence. We were married on a Friday afternoon. When we returned Sunday night from our brief honeymoon, I found that my bungalow had been entered. Things were in disarray, but the only thing missing was the rose shaded lamp. I sensed trouble.

On a certain Monday morning, I learned that the freckle-faced ex-dick was efficiency man for the Monarch Studio, that he had laid a trap for me and taken the lamp for evidence. They arrested me in my husband's absence. When the news reached him, he left his efficiency office and came tearing down to the County Jail to see what the trouble was all about. That freckle faced enemy of mine must have waylaid him and given him some data, for he faced me with the facts when the matron let him into the women's quarters.

"Darling," I pleaded. "I can't account for it. I must be a kleptomaniac and I don't know it." That was a new possibility he hadn't thought of. Whether he really believed me guilty or not I don't know but he was certainly a good sport and saw me through it anyway. He managed to get my case postponed three times on one pretext or another, then used his influence to have the charge dropped "for lack of evidence."

After I was out, Louis said several pointed things to me and stated that a divorce was imperative. I thanked him for his help and said he could have a divorce. And my heart is not at all broken.

\* \* \*

I don't work at the studios any more. I make sandwiches and jerk sodas in a drug store downtown. You know the system they use—soda-jerkers don't get their hands on any cash. The customer is given a pasteboard check and pays the cashier in person. There isn't a chance to lift a thing except milk, but after three months in the county jail, I've got sense enough to know my fingers would burn if I touched one bottle.



*The soft light of that  
stolen lamp must have  
dulled his senses, for he  
proposed as I had hoped.*





# TARNISHED GOLD

*When vanity and selfishness on the part of the husband turn the gold of the wedding ring to brass, what is there for the woman to do but to solve her problems as this courageous woman did?*



*I taught him make up—  
it was the beginning of  
his career and I made it  
for him*

**I**T ISN'T quite correct to say that I am the wife of a star. I was his wife for many long years, and somehow, though another now bears his name and basks in his reflected glory, I have never been able to reach a mental realization that he does not still belong to me. It would be better for me if I could.

My present husband is worth five thousand men like Wayne Deforest. He has all the virtues and qualities that Wayne lacked and he makes me as happy and comfortable as it is possible for a woman to be. For three years now I have nestled in the lap of luxury and been loved and appreciated as I never was before, and yet, in

my subconscious mind there still lives the feeling that I am Wayne's real mate.

How gaily we flash through the joyful days of youth, planting a thoughtless seed here and a careless oat there, unmindful of the crop of consequences to be garnered later on! We think we are free, but over our heads hangs the great Law of Compensation—for all the world like the sword of Damocles, while Memory stands by binding us tightly and forever to past performances. It is a queer game, Life!

Perhaps if I were not the "mother type" I could forget Wayne, but the memory of him as he was when I



met him still makes me want to protect him and keep the world from hurting him. He was that kind, my Wayne.

## The Heart Hungry Chorus Girl

I WAS a chorus girl with a fly-by-night musical comedy playing in the South. It was a hard life and lonely for me, for I had no "home folks" to write to and send frequent gifts of clothing and food, as most of the other girls did. I was merely a shuttlecock tossed from one hardship to another, laughing with the other girls through the vicissitudes of the one night stands. Of course, I had my love affairs, but they were not serious as far as the men of the company were concerned, for I was not stage struck and had little desire to carve out a professional future. What I wanted was a home and babies.

During the winter in the South I met many men at the after show suppers. Any girl who has traveled in the South will know the kind—wonderful men among protected women, but forgetting all about chivalry when with girls like me. I was insulted so much that it was the rule rather than the exception. These experiences left me no illusions whatever. I was young yet weary of the world. Other members of the company laughed at me, called me "prude" and "dreamer", and left me much alone.

It was while in this mood that I met Wayne. It was in Little Rock, in a dingy boarding house. Suffering from an ulcerated tooth and one cheek swollen far out of bounds, I had elected to remain behind and join the company two weeks later when it came through on its way North. For several days I stayed in my room, glad of a chance to rest and wondering how I could ever survive the dentist bill and the loss of two weeks' salary. Unable to pay for having meals sent to my dismal hall bedroom, I went down stairs the third night.

Wayne sat across from me at the table and he was the only human being who seemed to notice my arrival. He hopped up and held my chair for me and gave me a friendly little smile when I thanked him. He did not try to start any conversation and I was too miserable to talk anyway, but I noticed his clean cut face and his pleasant ways with the other boarders. On the fourth day he walked out of the dining room when I did and exchanged a few remarks in the hall. He asked me about my tooth and if I was to be a permanent guest at the house. I told him I was there for dental treatments and would be leaving in about two weeks, but I did not tell him I was a chorus girl.

The next evening he invited me to dinner at a downtown café and though I looked very "swell", it was only on one side of my face. Wayne did not seem to notice my defects or my poor road-worn suit. He was so delighted at being out, "seeing a little life," as he put it. That remark revealed to me the narrowness of his sphere. To my blasé mind, there was nothing exciting in a tiny restaurant serving thirty-five cent meals. Seeing life! How little the boy knew!

As he rattled on, I learned that he was a country boy from Fort Smith and he "came to the city" to study medicine. After school and Saturdays he worked in the baggage room of the local railroad station in order to get money for his board. His mother had passed away several months before and he was alone in the world. He had three years more to study.

## That Mother Instinct!

IT WAS during this recital that the mother instinct I was born in me. He was so young, so eager and so unsophisticated. As I watched his animated face and noted the clean-cut features and the healthy pink of his complexion, I almost knew what the world would

do to him. He was too handsome to be turned loose without the influence of a home to steady him. I shuddered when I thought what women of certain types would do to him and I could almost see the lines of dissipation marring that clean young face. Even though his mind was as clean as an angel's, there was that something about his personality which would attract any woman. It wasn't sex appeal altogether—it was a spiritual quality that made people notice and remember him. It is terrible to look upon a youth like this one and realize that his very attractions will prove his undoing. Why cannot we have wisdom first and then develop attraction?

I was frankly interested in Wayne. The more I saw of him the more I wanted to protect him—to keep sinister influences away from him—to see him emerge from his youth unspoiled. But I hesitated to tell him of my profession for fear he might have the provincial idea of the chorus girl and I did not want to see the expression I had seen on the faces of other men when they learned that I was what they term "legitimate prey". Respectable chorus girls always suffer from impressions planted by weaker members of the profession. Men on the trail of a good time are not discriminating—I had learned that long ago—so I kept very still about my means of livelihood.

During the second week a traveling man dropped in at the boarding house. The minute he clapped eyes on me he said so that everyone at the table could hear—"Aren't you the little girl with the 'Arcadians'? Sure you are! I met you in Atlanta with Miss Wilton. Don't you remember?"

Of course, I remembered, but my soul was sick. There was an ominous silence at the table. Even the liver and bacon paused on its circular journey. Several of the women snorted contemptuously and it was only then I got courage to glance at Wayne. In his eyes I saw a look I had not expected. It was nothing to be afraid of—it was joy!

The boy had always wanted to meet a real chorus girl—a flesh and blood creature from the land of make believe. It was the great adventure for him. As we strolled about that evening in the moonlight, he reiterated his surprise and delight. He scolded me for not telling him before. It dawned on me gradually that knowing a chorus girl made him quite a hero at the medical school, so great is the curiosity and misunderstanding extant about the girls behind the footlights. But there was no guile in his admiration; he seemed to be proud of my acquaintance and to want to be with me. He asked thousands of questions about me and my life on the stage and he fought battles for me whenever anyone twitted him.

## A Boy's Love

NATURALLY, after the bars were down, I was able to talk straight from the shoulder. I told that boy more about life than he had ever dreamed of, and I tried to make him see that he must understand and avoid pitfalls in order to succeed. He took advice from me like a son and all the time he seemed to be clinging to me more and more. It was pathetic. The night the company came through, he accompanied me to the station, and he was too full for utterance. I never saw such dumb misery and I couldn't help him. Between sobs, he told me of his love—he wanted me—he would work hard and join me as soon as he could—I must never let him lose me. I was terribly shaken by his sincerity but I knew too much to ever believe that such a dream could come true. He was twenty, just one year older than I, but when it came to knowledge, he was a child. With an ache in my weary heart, I left him, but I watched his pathetic figure growing smaller and smaller as the train pulled out. So would it be with our love, I thought.



Several days later I received his first letter, the first of a deluge. I was startled by the boy's intensity. His adoration burned me. I was a goddess on a pedestal—his court of last appeal. Every night he wrote pages and pages, telling me every detail of his busy day and asking advice about things which worried him. Ever and always he talked about joining me just as soon as he was graduated. His insistence finally outran his desire to become a doctor. He needed me so badly that he was willing to give up his career and come to New York, his idea being that I could get him a position with some company. Naturally, I knew that the only place open to an inexperienced young man would be in the chorus and I was not willing to see him commit suicide in that way. As every chorus girl knows, a chorus man is one with his future behind him, in most cases, and when it meant marriage to one—not for me!

I tried to keep him calm and in school, thinking that it was a case of "puppy love" which would wear off in time, but the more I "mothered" him the more eager he became to join me for better or worse. For eight months I succeeded in holding him to his studies and then when it seemed as though New York could not escape him, I received an offer to "go into pictures". The salary was so much more than I had ever earned and the chance for advancement so much greater than in musical comedy that I accepted the offer with suspicious alacrity.

My first picture was a melodramatic affair, but I had a part which, though small, was a womanly sort of a young girl—rather wholesome, I should say. When that picture struck Little Rock a few months later, there was no holding Wayne Deforest. It fanned (*Continued on page 84*)



*While he was in New York he fell in love with his leading lady, and calmly asked for his freedom as soon as he returned to Hollywood*





*I had to act the part of a slavey to avoid recognition. I could not be known as his wife!*



# THE POISONED FOUNTAIN

*A woman who has been famous and passing beautiful, at forty-five seeks the fountain of youth and finds it, only to find a bitter, bitter drop within the fountain.*

*My fondest memory is of the first night I played Juliet to my Francois' Romeo. Did anyone in the audience realize that the kiss he pressed upon my eyes was the kiss which plighted our troth?*

TO be sixteen! To be beautiful as but few girls are beautiful! To know the joy and fire of living, to feel youth thrilling passionately through one's body! Ah, I was sixteen—once—and as a woman who has run through the whole gamut of human emotions, who has lived many incarnations in a brief span of earthly years, I know that I gripped the glory of life, the color and the bloom and the music—when I was sixteen!

As I loll here in my hammock looking out across the lawn at the massive sets being constructed for the latest

special production my Francois is to direct, the crimson rose that flaunts across my vision, swinging from the pergola, seems typical of the Eden rose that once I plucked, with what eager fingers; yes that I have plucked twice as it is given to but few women, though my fingers dripped blood from the thorns.

The scent of orange blossoms heavy on the April air of California thrills my brain with memories of those old days of triumph and of love.

Hark, there is a mocking bird, singing from the yellow



acacia tree! I call him my orchestra and I have only to close my eyes and I slip back, back through the years—

And I am there again, in my star dressing room; the orchestra is tuning, in the music room under the stage—the 'cellos, the violins! It is the first night of my Juliet!

To play Juliet at sixteen, my beauty and talent acclaimed by a nation and opposite the man I loved—is not there achievement and realization? Did any realize that first night that Romeo set on my eyes the first kiss of our first love and that we were great lovers in fact as in play? It was the innocent love of youth—too soon to pass out of sight into the realm of the immortal!

Even in the adoration of all those other men I never forgot Francois. I looked for him through the years. What woman ever forgets first love? In her subconscious mind she always loves the first even though she thinks she hates him. And the first kiss of love—she never forgets it. It dwells on her lips through the incarnations; it stands between her soul and the kisses of every other lover.

Do you recall, you who were of that generation when I was on the boards in New York, how newspapers praised my beauty more than my dramatic ability? It was Francois' delight to clip those notices for me. I have a bundle now, yellowed with years; snatches of them are still music to my ears. . . "that golden tinted skin that blended with the bronze of her hair," . . . "firm magnetic figure pulsing with personality," . . . a woman wrote that. "The delicate oval of her face in which is set a passionate crimson mouth and great eyes made to be kissed by Romeo." It was the most celebrated New York critic that spoke of "the radiance of her beauty, the fire and the glow that creeps subtly over the foot, just as the melody of her voice and the charm of her personality take possession of the audience!"

Indeed, they praised my talent, but to me the praise of my beauty meant most. I believe we women are barbarians at heart; we have remained elemental in the desire of loveliness of face and form; we pray for it; we bleed for it; it is our god.

And to see the years work their havoc with what I prized most—and then to live through the miracle of rejuvenation! But wait! More than to any other woman of my generation, perhaps, have come love and adulation, yes, and tragedy. How can I tell briefly a life so full?

### Love or a Throne?

AFTER those triumphal months in New York we went to London for a season of repertoire. It was during the run of Camille—I was hardly yet eighteen—that night after night a queer little dark man sat in the royal box and never once took his eyes off me when I was on the stage. Manager Benton brought him to my dressing room one evening and there in state, I, the queen of emotional drama, received him, the half crazy king of a small European monarchy.

How gracious, how insinuating he was! How courtly! So different from my plain impulsive boy, Francois. Vain little American girl that I was, how could I resist his ardent eyes with the subtly meaning tremble of the lids when he looked at me? At the end of a week I accepted his invitation to dine with him.

Francois was furious.

"You will risk your reputation!" he said. "How can you, an American actress, hope to be anything but—well—a friend to a king?"

I laughed at him and cried out that he was jealous!

The day I rode out in the park with the king in his handsome carriage behind prancing blacks, we were the talk of all London. What it meant to Manager Benton! Crowded houses night after night throughout a prolonged season. To Francois it meant anger, jealousy, anguish. We were to have been married as soon as we returned to the United States. But despite his pleading I was

stubborn, persistent. With the true spirit of the coquette I enjoyed his pain.

After six weeks of royal entertainment the king came to my dressing room one evening and was presenting me with an emerald studded brooch. The door swung open and Francois stepped in. How handsome he was. He was dressed as Claude in *The Lady of Lyons*. His eyes blazed. His lips pressed tight. With a sweep of his hand he dashed the jewel into the corner of the room.

Indeed I loved Francois, but what woman mad for adulation could have frowned on the attentions of a king? The rift within the lute of our love slowly widened till Francois left the company and joined an English manager.

I closed my London season and then came that summer of mad gaiety in Paris—the enamorata of royalty. One reckless extravagance followed another—dinners, balls, hunting parties. I was the talk and the toast of that marvelous city. Was not there a crown of fame—"infamy" was the one word I got from Francois, written on his card. Yes, I know to outward appearances I may have verged near, but I was too wise—shall I say too cold—to draw on myself any curse of familiarity with this hot-blooded foreigner. This is why at the end of three months he implored me to marry him.

Could I swap the adulation of my public for this vicarious greatness as the American wife of a petty monarch? I pondered—then there came out of the tropics strange newspaper reports of the plantations owned there by King Victoire, where natives toiled and sweated under such rigorous discipline that those who were disobedient had hands cut off as an example to the rest. I confronted him with the statements. He laughed harshly.

"We of Europe have ideas of obedience that you lax Americans know nothing about," he sneered. I shivered in repugnance.

Next morning, my western good sense in the fore, I set out for America, glad of my escape, glad of Benton's welcome at the pier, eager to sign me for another season.

### The Evil Genius of Beauty

HAD I not deserved the reputation of being the most beautiful woman in the profession would the star of my destiny have found the path it did during that two years in New York? Not a foreign monarch, but an occidental king of finance was my foremost admirer. Banker, former member of the presidential cabinet, the most conspicuous citizen of the Knickerbocker city for twenty years, he was sixty, old enough to be my father. Descendant of a colonial family he held first place socially. His wife and daughters—no, he was not among the marriageables—shone as social lights and models of propriety. I had seen enough of the great world and dwelt so long in the freedom of the life behind the scenes, that I was a bit intolerant of conventionalities, though to be sure, my bump of caution was well developed.

Old Van der Neer sought youth and freshness and above all, like many a man of great brain and vast ability, he was mad about beauty. Just to sit opposite me and gaze made him happy and I basked in his admiration.

Love? "Jamais, jamais, la grande jamais!" as Victoire used to exclaim. I have never loved any man after that parting with Francois. Neither could I yield to "Van's" desire to make of me the parasite he wished. I may write that fact to the credit of my strength of character, I suppose.

Into the midst of frequent tête-a-têtes with "Van" breezed out of the glorious west another king, Dan Carter, owner of many copper mines in Montana. He was a typical westerner. He had begun on wages with a pick and had made himself a magnate.

The first time I saw him was on a night "Van" and I dined together at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, the fashionable



hotel of that day—naughty old chap, his family was in Newport. I saw that great bronzed man with tawny hair, so unlike the pale faced denizen of the metropolis, gazing at me from behind a fan palm. I knew the meaning of the look. I had seen it many times before, but never so intense, so impassioned.

Plainly it said, "I am hungry for your beauty. You are for me. I shall make you mine!" Even in that first absorbing gaze I felt his resentment of Van.

Next day the hotel manager came to me half apologetically asking if I would meet Miss Williams, a guest of the hotel and anxious to know me. Good naturedly I consented and let Miss Williams, typical blasé New Yorker, fete me for several days. Then she had me as guest of honor at an after theatre supper party. Among her guests was Carter. Sly dog! Had he been a New Yorker he would have been bolder in his game of making my acquaintance, for Miss Williams was a smart professional chaperone, hired for the occasion. But in his manner toward me, typically western, there was a reverence which made me almost—love him.

Frankly Dan told me how he disapproved of my association with old "Van" and I tell you it took all my diplomacy to manage the two of them and keep them separated. I can now see his point of view. To his intense nature I was the one woman; but to me he was only one of many—let him win if he can, I used to say to myself.

He won, in true Montana fashion.

For three months I had enjoyed my game with these two kings set off against each other. As a man of the world "Van" saw it and enjoyed it too—because he flattered himself that against his riches and his fascination a "crude westerner," as he loved to describe Dan, had no chance.

### The Imperious Love God

HOW many people in New York, even the cleverest headquarters men, have ever solved the mystery of the shooting of old Mortimer Van der Neer? One morning his valet, whom he had dismissed for the night, came in to find him sprawled on the floor of his bedroom, in slippers and dressing robe, stone cold. Immediately that shooting was hushed up by his family, who attributed it to a midnight burglar. They suspected the reason, doubtless.

That night of the shooting I had accepted "Van's" dare to dine with him in his suite. Disguised with a veil I slipped in unseen of any in the hotel. It was a great lark—but a reckless one. I felt myself in command of the situation. I could keep old Van in his place. Perhaps Van thought differently, since he received me in dishabille, with a tray of cocktails.

He drank many. He grew familiar. I parried his attentions and kept my temper. He insisted on my dining sitting on the arm of his chair. I humored him. I could have escaped and all would have gone well had I been the only guest that slipped in unseen.

Suddenly Dan parted the velvet portieres and stalked into the room, an image of righteous wrath. Old Van rose in his drink and his dignity and ordered Dan out. There were hot words. Dan told me to go home. In a petulant drunken rage Van seized a bottle of champagne and started at Dan. A flash! A shot! Van clapped his hand to his heart and staggered out of the room.

"Get out of here, take a cab and go home," Dan ordered. I threw on my hat and veil and slipped away. Dan followed me. The shot had not been heard in the hotel since the suite was high up on the top story.

That shooting, the truthful story of which is here, twenty-five years after, told for the first time, drew Dan and me nearer together. It was our great secret. Immediately he wanted me to marry him and quit the stage. But how could I marry him openly? All New York

knew my association with old Van der Neer and Dan's infatuation and I feared that our marriage would cast suspicion on us both.

None the less I yielded to the most persistent suit that ever won a woman, consenting only on condition that the marriage remain secret till I thought best to make it public.

### In a Gilded Cage

WE took up our abode in the most sumptuous apartment house in all New York in those days, owned by Dan. A private elevator led up to our lavishly furnished quarters. There, in a setting for which any woman would have swapped her very soul, I lived for two years. There my daughter was born. There in the secrecy I insisted on, and to which Dan consented to shield my good name, he felt, I sat and watched the world go by, that world I loved. The old days of gaiety, of adulation of the praises and applause of my public, which was my life blood—where were they? They had all been replaced by the fireside love of one man, his tempestuous adoration. I began to see that even if our marriage were made public I could not be held in the golden fetters of one man. Not even the love of my child could tie me down—and I did love Beatrice most dearly, as I do now.

I began to feel that gladly I would throw away all this fortune that Montana poured at my feet, Dan's love and the life of ease and luxury just once more to smell the grease paint of the dressing room and to thrill to the call boy's "Fifteen minutes!" Oh, the taint of that life was in my blood and I could not free myself from it.

So I left Dan—a stormy, stormy parting and years of pursuit before that strong splendid fellow gave up and divorced me. What a pity he hadn't married the woman who would have appreciated him. He was made to be an ideal husband and I denied him the opportunity.

My beauty won back my place on the stage. It carried me successfully through the years. But alas, through it, I committed a foolish mistake typical of womankind. I made the most of my beauty but not of my brains. So I held my place on the boards by physical not by mental qualifications. And when the physical began to fade—

You who were in New York in 1914 and later will remember the prominent part I took in war work and you will remember, too, the sad fact that I was then fat! I was no longer the slender Juliet. I believe my vanity would have carried me on had I not come face to face with stern reality.

### Out of the Past

CAME a note from François. He had been wounded in France and had come to America on furlough. He wanted to see me. To see me!

I got out the old portraits of us as Romeo and Juliet and I sat long, staring at myself in the glass. A loathing filled me that François must see me thus—a woman past 40—fat, crowsfooted, a sag in her cheeks and a tell-tale fullness beneath the chin. Even though I knew he had gray on his temples I could not bear to have him see that the glory of my beauty had dimmed, that I could not gaze back at him out of eternal youth. I was Browning's woman in "The Statue and the Bust" desperately praying to "arrest the remains of young and fair and rivet them while the seasons range."

I sent word I was ill and fled with Beatrice to California to avoid him. I fled from one blow to my vanity only to meet a greater.

My old time manager, Benton, had swept on to fortune on the tide of motion pictures. He was a wealthy producer in Southern California. I telegraphed him from the Hotel St. Francis in San Francisco, asking what chance there might be for me in pictures. He wired an



enthusiastic answer. To him my name was one to conjure with, but alas for his imagination—he had none.

Beatrice and I set out for Los Angeles. Benton met us at the train. He took us to dinner and all through the meal he talked incessantly of the success in pictures ahead—not of me—but of Beatrice, my almost plain daughter.

Can you see how I was stung to the quick that this mercenary manager saw in Beatrice what all the screen is seeking and what all the world is seeking on the screen—youth! Youth, that has no tell tale lines and fat and wrinkles! Youth, that for all film purposes I had left far behind!

*My daughter, poor plain little Beatrice, begged me to give up all my ambitions to make a career in the movies and go away with her—to make a home!*



### That Fatal Screen Test

WHEN Beatrice went for her screen test I went along and insisted on one for myself. Benton consented seemingly to humor me. That test became one of the tragedies of my life, yet my vanity had to have one more blow. Flatly I asked Benton to star me, as Nazimova

and Pauline Frederick were starred, women no longer ingenues.

"You have not their emotional ability," he answered, and told me he would sign me as a grande dame in the company in which he wanted to place Beatrice.

I laughed at him in scorn.

How fast events crowded on me! Benton told me that



Francois, who had entered the picture field in England before the war, was coming to the west to direct. Then came Dan, out of his long seclusion in Montana and demanded that I, the guardian of Beatrice, refuse my permission to her going into pictures.

"It is no place for my daughter," he averred.

I was obstinate and then he threatened to reveal my connection with the murder of old



*On my knees I begged the famous specialist to make me beautiful and young once more.*

Van der Neer in that old past and ruin my career. I know Dan would never have been so ignoble as to tell that story, but I knew his forceful, stubborn nature and I yielded.

"Come away from it all, mother," Beatrice begged me, "Come, let us make a quiet home together. Father gives me enough to support you and all I want on earth is a quiet home."

A quiet home! Once I had escaped from one and the

old desire for applause and adulation was beating at my doors. I could not go away with Beatrice and that meant that she would have to go away from me.

There was in town a famous specialist, Dr. Maier. I went to him and poured into his sympathetic ears all my mad desires. I confided to him that I wanted to turn back the years and become young again as Fanny Ward had so recently done; that I yearned to renew the triumphs of youth, to feel (Continued on page 96)



# BLIND VENGEANCE

SITTING like an impassive Buddha, without a trace of emotion on my callous, young face, my fountain pen flies over my notebook, filling it with crime, murder, sudden death, intrigue, illicit love, shady business deals, cruelty, rape. And while my flying pen catches all the kaleidoscopic colors of life in Los Angeles, of which Hollywood is a suburb and the most colorful part, I have little time to observe expressions. The human voice, however, has come to mean everything to me. From its delicate shadings, I can tell the profession, the character, the truthfulness or sincerity of the speaker from the witness stand. I am a man expert on human emotions.

And at night, as I transcribe the parts of testimony asked for by either the prosecution or the defense, I muse on the strange vagaries of human nature. How can people murder? And having murdered, how can they live? One week as a court reporter should cure the most hardened criminal of his vice. For he would learn what I, in a humble, unpublished way, have learned—it *doesn't pay*. The mill grinds slowly—but it always grinds the blood and the flesh and the sinew of the criminal through its crushing hoppers—some day.

I have just transcribed a lot of testimony for the defense in the case of THE STATE VERSUS PHILLIP CORLEY. It illustrates my point admirably. Poor Corley thought he wanted to murder his man—and now, blind as a bat, bereft of all he has ever held dear, he will probably be convicted of second-degree murder. And his wife—I caught glimpses of her as she stammered and sobbed out her sordid story on the witness stand. She thought, pretty fool that she is, like so many of these addle-pated, vain movie queens, that she wanted her doctor more than she wanted to keep her conscience clear, her skirts free of blood. Perhaps she didn't know that those spangled flounces would trail in blood and slime and lurid publicity. These over-sexed, foolish women so seldom think.

## Testimony for the Defense

THE testimony may interest you. I'll slip you a page or two: The woman, the wife of the murderer, is on the stand. Oh, yes, she turned to him when she had ruined him, as if her tearful smiles could give him back his poor, sightless eyes, mend his broken heart, restore to him his faith in women. You think I feel pretty strongly about this? Perhaps I do, but it was such a damned outrage.

The defense lawyer, Calhoun, has called Mrs. Corley to the stand. All testimony but that of herself and her husband is in; the jury is tired out, anxious to get off duty. The man is guilty; why not sentence him to ten years in San Quentin and be done with it? is the attitude they indicate in their weary shuffling of feet. But they perk up as Mrs. Corley takes the stand, a dainty, lacy handkerchief held to her trembling lips. The curious tourists, grateful for the chance of seeing a motion picture star "close-up", and without "make-up" have been drawn in throngs to the courthouse.

Q. Now, Mrs. Corley, I want you to answer my questions without hesitation. Speak up clearly, so the jury can hear you. Don't look at me. Look at them. What is your name?

A. Maryse Elizabeth Corley.

Q. Your age?

A. Twenty—twenty-four years old! (A reporter grins

*The unbelievable intrigue and deceit which a star and a doctor weave ends in murder, the verbatim report of which a court reporter gives us here. And you won't be able to guess the ending!*

and scribbles hastily. Press notices had persistently called her the child wife, the "baby star".)

Q. Your place of residence?

A. Carlton Arms Hotel, Hollywood.

Q. Now, Mrs. Corley, speak up loudly. Tell these gentlemen where and how and when you met the deceased, Dr. Roger Earle.

A. I met—I first s-saw Roger—Dr. Earle—he was the studio doctor, you know.

Q. A little louder, please.

Don't be afraid of the jury. They are all your friends.

A. Well, I had a case of Kleig eyes. I have been on the screen for three years, have made quite a reputation—

Prosecution: We object. Your honor, that matter is irrelevant, immaterial and incompetent to the prosecution of this case.

Judge: I think the witness should be allowed a little leeway, gentlemen, in her recital. Proceed, Madame.

Prosecution: But your honor, we can demonstrate to you that this witness intends by sly insertions of references to her fame and popularity to influence this jury in her favor.

Judge: Objection overruled! Proceed with your case, gentlemen.

Q. Now, Mrs. Corley, will you kindly go on with your story, telling it in your own words, in your own way, just as you have told it to me?

Prosecution: We object. The counsel is leading the witness.

Judge: Proceed, gentlemen, but please do not ask leading questions; I want this witness, however, to have a chance to tell her story without constant interruptions.

Q. Go on, Mrs. Corley.

## A Sympathetic Doctor

A. WELL, sir, I had a case of Kleig eyes, like I said, and they hurt me terribly. It was the first time I'd ever had the terrible disease. I was crying in agony, and Roger—I mean, Dr. Earle—attended me. He put a healing lotion in my eyes and gave me a treatment every day. Even when my eyes were well, he kept me coming to him. He said my eyes were naturally weak, and that they needed treatment. He was very nice to me—very—

Q. When did Dr. Earle, if he ever did, begin to make love to you?

Prosecution: We object! That is a leading question, and no matter in what way it is answered, will convey an impression of guilt on the part of the deceased in relation to Mrs. Corley.

Judge: Objection overruled. Proceed.

Q. Answer the question, Mrs. Corley. Did Mr. Earle show you more attention than is considered ethical?

A. I don't know exactly what you mean by that. I'm not so well educated.

Q. Did he make improper advances to you?

Prosecution (wearily): We object. Will the court please note that we object to this entire line of testimony as being immaterial, irrelevant, and incompetent?

Judge: Objection overruled.

A. May I answer now? Thank you, judge. (Handkerchief to eyes; lips trembling, I observe with a hasty glance toward the witness box.) Roger—Dr. Earle—began to make love to me almost immediately. I mean, before my eyes got well.

Q. Did you encourage the doctor, Mrs. Corley?

A. I—I—I'm afraid, I guess I did. He told me I was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen—



## BLIND VENGEANCE



"Roger was kissing me and was begging me to go away with him."



Prosecution: We object, your honor, on the grounds that the testimony of the witness is irrelevant and immaterial, and aimed at this jury with a malicious endeavor to prejudice their minds in her favor.

Judge: Confine yourself to the main facts of the case, Mrs. Corley.

A. Yes, sir, that's what I'm trying to do. Mr. Craig asked me if Dr. Earle made love to me and if I encouraged him. He did, and I did encourage him. My husband was justified—

Prosecution: We object! We object!

Judge: Objection sustained. Proceed Mrs. Corley, without expressing opinions as to the guilt or innocence of the defendant, your husband.

A. Oh, I want to help him! I'm to blame for it all! It was because I loved to be admired; because I was foolish, vain, and wicked, that my poor Phil is blind and on trial for his life! Oh, my God! Try me instead! Let poor, blind Phillip go!

## Order of the Judge

JUDGE: (Rapping sharply with his knuckles on the table) Please, Mrs. Corley, we are trying to conduct this trial in an expeditious and legal manner. Please do not become hysterical. Go on with your story.

A. I don't mean to get hysterical, but God knows I'm unhappy and miserable! If you convict Phil I'll commit suicide. Yes, Judge, I'll remember! Well, sir, after my eyes were well, Roger—Dr. Earle—took to coming to the lot quite a good deal, to watch me work. I am a star, or was before the trial, and Phillip was playing juvenile leads and character parts. He can make up wonderfully to look like an old man. I've always played straight leads. Oh, excuse me! I'll try to talk shorter.

## Phillip was Jealous

WELL, anyway, I went back to work, and I was so tickled with how quickly Dr. Earle fixed my eyes up that I recommended him to everyone. And, of course, he was interested in me by this time and I wanted to show him I cared for him, so I sent him all the work I could. When Phil got a case of Klieg eyes, I sent him to Dr. Earle. Phillip had begun to get jealous and suspicious of the doctor, but nothing really wrong had happened. Phil has always been terribly jealous. I was afraid he'd see something wrong when there really wasn't.

Q. Were you in love with your husband at this time, Mrs. Corley?

A. I didn't think I was. Phil and I married when we were kids—just extras. I was a bathing beauty on the Mack Sennett lot, and he played in comedies with Fatty Arbuckle. You remember him—he was the boy they always put in a dress suit, because he was so handsome and looked like a gentleman. I—well, Gloria Swanson didn't have nothing on me, if I do say it myself. Yes, I'm going to hurry on. Well, Phil went to Dr. Earle for treatment, because the doctor had cured me up so quickly. And Dr. Earle put something in his eyes to make them worse, instead of better.

## Hearsay Testimony

PROSECUTION: We object to this testimony, your honor, on the ground that it is hearsay, that the witness has no personal knowledge of such wrong-doing on the part of the deceased, who can no longer rise to take his own part.

Defense: By a series of questions and answers, your honor, I intend to show that the witness did have such a knowledge and that, much as I hate to have it go into the records against this brave little woman, who is sacrificing all to save her husband from death or imprison-

ment, she did actually participate in and condone the doctor's nefarious malpractice, which resulted in the blindness of the defendant.

Judge: Proceed, but do not "lead" the witness.

Q. Now, Mrs. Corley, will you tell the gentlemen of the jury just what was planned and carried out in regard to your husband's eyes?

A. Oh, I hate to tell it! I loathe myself! I don't know how I ever came to do such a horrible thing! The doctor fairly hypnotized me. He told me first that if Phil's eyes stayed bad for a while we could have an awfully good time. I laughed and said, "Couldn't we though?" And Dr. Earle, sort of half joking, told me he intended to keep Phil blind as long as he could. He put something in his eyes and bandaged them, and told him not to take the bandages off for three weeks. Poor Phil did exactly as he was told, for the doctor said if he took them off too soon, he might go entirely blind. Everyone in the movies has a horror of going blind. Klieg eyes are terrible. You go crazy with pain. While Phil's eyes were bandaged he didn't work, of course, and the doctor and I had an awfully good time together. He was on the set every day for part of the day, and we always lunched together. Phil said he didn't want me to stay home on his account, and so I went out with Roger, telling Phil I was going with a crowd. Phil was always so good to me, about things like that.

## A Mother's Cry

I AM interrupted as I write by a scream of rage—one of those shrill, crescendo screams that we court reporters hear so often. It comes from the "relatives' row"—that half-circle of sobbing, somberly dressed men and women—usually women predominate—who cluster around the prisoner, supposedly for comfort.

In the commotion which results—I do not have to record such commotions, as they are not a part of the transcript—I look at the screamer, a little, hump-shouldered woman in rusty black, with a funny, old-fashioned bonnet askew on her iron-grey hair. She is Mrs. Corley, Phillip Corley's mother, brought on to Los Angeles by her son's trial. She has been apathetic until now, spending most of her time dabbling futilely at her reddened eyes, putting out a timid hand occasionally to touch her son's clenched fist. Corley sits staring with sightless eyes toward the witness box, where his wife is giving away her reputation with wanton gestures, in a late, courageous attempt to save his life. I suspect that she is enjoying the notoriety that is coming to her in whole pages of the sensational city dailies—papers filled with "sob-stuff" and incorrectly reported testimony.

Now Phillip Corley's mother has screamed,—the rising, terrifying scream of hysteria. And as she screams she rises and throws her bent little body toward the witness chair, where Maryse Corley is huddled, her hand to her mouth, her baby-blue eyes wide with horror.

"I told Phil not to marry her. She warn't nobody—no, her mother took in washing—done ours—for us! Nobodies! Hussy!"

It is an old story to the court reporter—this throwing off of civilization, this passionate jump-back to the primitive.

But it is blind Phillip Corley who catches his mother, before her claw-like fingers reach the throat of the frightened picture star. And as the judge looks at the clock and declares a recess for ten minutes, during which order will be restored and Mrs. Corley can be attended by a physician, I sit there, thinking, thinking.

## What is Love?

WHAT is this overwhelming thing that Phillip Corley calls love, which Maryse Corley calls love, that Dr. Roger Earle, dead, called love? I have taken down



Q. Mrs. Corley, will you tell the court if a criminal intimacy existed between you and the deceased, Dr. Roger Earle?

A. Yes—yes, sir. (Maryse Corley has the grace to hide her face in her hands until the flush dies out.)

Q. Will you tell the gentlemen of the jury of any times and places during which such an intimacy was carried on?

A. The first time—we had been seeing each other for several weeks—we planned to go to Riverside. Phil was in bed with his eyes bandaged. He had to stay in a

(Continued on page 88)

the heart secrets of so many lovers—secrets which have brought them to this courtroom at last, no longer to be secrets, but to be written in little hooks and curves in my little notebook, and to be blazoned on every front page of the city. I am afraid of love. All I have seen of love has been the blood-red results of it. Maybe somewhere there is clean, sweet love—but here—

Ten minutes later we settle in our places again. The bailiff brings in the blind defendant, who has been refreshed with cool water in the little ante-room. But he does not look refreshed. His high cheek-bones glow with fever. If he is committed to prison, he may yet cheat "Justice" by inconsiderately dying.

Again the wife takes the stand, pale and trembling. For once she has neglected to powder and rouge during a recess.

Previously the defense had introduced hotel registers to prove that Dr. Roger Earle had registered for himself and "wife" at hotels in Santa Barbara, Riverside and Del Monte. Two hotel clerks had positively identified Maryse Corley as the "wife." Now the questioning is about over.

But the judge detained her. "Bailiff, take Mrs. Corley in charge. I will sign a warrant for her arrest."



# THE CENSOR and the MAN-EATER

*He came to Hollywood to reform it—  
to clean up pictures. And just look  
what happened to him!*

*He held the empty  
goblet high and gazed  
at it with warm eyes.  
The figures on the  
frieze came to life and  
danced about the sil-  
ver rim. John was in-  
terested but not par-  
ticularly surprised*



"...and mind you don't eat any pickled cabbage; you know it always goes agin' you. And pa, you hear me! Don't you go shenanagin' around with any of these painted movie vampires when you get to Hollywood!"

The little old lady under the black bonnet with its bunch of dejected-looking pansies brushed an imaginary speck of dust from her husband's painfully new, bright

blue serge suit. He laughed comfortably, and patted her on the arm.

"Now ma, don't worry about me. This ain't the first trip I ever took. The year after we were married, you remember, I went clear up to Kansas City, and nobody handed me any wooden nickels, either." He chuckled complacently.

"And as for movie actresses, ain't I a pillar of the



church and fifty-five years old?"

"Huh! I guess a pillar of the church is as soft as anybody else when one of those movie vamps gets after him. And as for bein' old enough to know better, age ain't no protection against second-childhood puppy love. You remember that widdler. . . ."

The man picked up his grip hastily. "Now ma, don't drag that up again. I'm not taking up with any widders on this trip, nor vamps either. I'm going to Hollywood as a member of the Censors' Commission, to study the morals of the movies. And if they're as bad as they say they are, there'll be no more movies shown in Rock Center, to corrupt the morals of our children!"

Pride in her man beamed in the look she gave him, and in response to the pleasant adulation his chest swelled. But his momentary dignity was shattered by the shrill shriek of the train, which crashed around a turn in the road and snorted its way into the station, like a great, fire-breathing steed, suddenly pulled up on its haunches.

Then there was confusion in the little station of Rock Center. Neighbors shook the departing traveler's hand. Advice and jocular comments were shouted. The little wife hung upon his neck for one long good-bye kiss, and he, with a great to-do of gathering bags and parcels of lunch put up by friends to eat on the way, mounted the steps. And in a medley of waving handkerchiefs and shouted farewells, the train moved out of the station.

John Greenwood deposited his luggage on one of the dusty, red-plush seats with a sigh of excitement. At last he was on his way. At the next stop, in Des Moines, he would change to the flyer that would bring him and the other members of the commission to Los Angeles and its important suburb, Hollywood. His mission was begun!

Perhaps the privilege to save the movies from their sins would be granted him. If Hollywood would only listen to his warnings, perhaps it might yet be spared the awful fate of Sodom and Gomorrah! He breathed a prayer that it might be so.

The journey to Los Angeles increased his perturbation of spirit. The censors mostly seemed strangely un-mindful of the seriousness of their mission. Several of them seemed to consider it a junket, and anticipated with pleasure the atmosphere of revelry that Hollywood must surely harbor. And the stories that they told! John shuddered to think of them.

One tale related with great gusto, in the smoking-car one evening, had to do with the amours of a certain leading lady. A beautiful little blonde thing, she was, and canny. She wanted to get into the movies and had the greatest confidence in herself. But she didn't want to go the long, long trail of an extra.

### Gold-Diggers' Methods

IT happened that the head of one of the biggest studios had once been host at a very lively party at a roadhouse near New York. The party became so very lively that it was raided. The matter was hushed up, however, because the participants were men of power and wealth.

This canny little gold-digger—John was painfully ignorant of the meaning of this word—intimated to the studio-head that a little job would come in handy; it would be unfortunate indeed if the old scandal were to be raked up. But there was another partner who must be won over. But fortunately, from the girl's point of view, this partner also was not invulnerable. There had been an affair with a scenario writer. She wasn't a real scenario-writer, it was said. She had been a stenographer, but when she proved kind to the producer, she was given the title of scenario-writer, though about all she wrote was checks. Finally the producer tired of her, threw her over. She was inconsiderate enough to commit suicide. The whole unpleasant affair was noised abroad. But the coroner was prevailed upon to declare

the death accidental. So it was hushed up. And the little gold-digger won another stronghold in the company when she declared her entire willingness to resurrect the scandal. She further entrenched her position by an affair with a director whom she won away from his wife.

But her last stroke was her masterpiece. Somebody discovered her in an embarrassing affair with a stage-hand, on a deserted set. She was told to report to the office for her "time". She did, and paralyzed the general manager by demanding an extended contract under a larger salary. If she did not get it, she said coolly, she would certainly give to the newspapers the inside story of several little intrigues among studio higher-ups. She got her contract and her raise!

Then there was the affair of the screen vampire who had had half a dozen husbands and had dispensed with the formality of a ceremony with at least as many other men in the film colony. The lady had the valuable ability to make each of her men friends want to marry her; she made them look upon her as a poor little, wronged clinging vine, though she is tall, self-sufficient and about as clinging in reality as a telephone pole.

And especially they spoke of Estrella Dumas, the charmer of charmers; of her beauty, her wit, her fascination—and her wickedness! She was a man-eater, they said!

These stories, enjoyed so vastly by the other censors, struck John as one more proof that the glory of Hollywood was soon to be one with Ninevah and Tyre, that surely the Lord could not longer endure the sins of an iniquitous city. They also increased his determination to beware of vampires. They would never cause his feet to stumble on the path of righteousness, he swore.

### The Man-eater's Advent

AT Omaha, new passengers joined themselves to the, by this time, friendly party of travelers, after the west-bound coaches from Chicago were fastened on to the train. And one among the newcomers caused every head to turn, every tongue to wag frantically.

"Look! There's Estrella Dumas, as I live!"

"She looks like a vamp, all right, all right. Look at them eyes. Oh baby boy!"

"The hussy! I wonder how she has the nerve to look at decent people in that way."

"So-ome baby! She can put her shoes in papa's trunk any time she wants to. When she turns those black eyes on me, I could forget I'm a married man with twins."

She was striking. Even John reluctantly admitted the fact. She swept through the train into her stateroom, preceded by a deferential porter and followed by a meek maid almost buried under a load of wraps, bags, golf clubs and magazines, and by an equally laden red-cap. She was dressed in black, of a rich, dull material cut on long, clinging lines. Her small black hat was draped in black Spanish lace that lent an intriguing shadow to her pale face. She affected a heavy make-up; dead white skin, no rouge, and lips as scarlet as if she had been biting ripe cherries. Her great dark eyes under their curled eyelashes could be provocative, luring. Now they were snapping, as she reproved her maid for some mis-demeanor.

John found himself thinking about Estrella Dumas all through the afternoon. Then he saw her again at dinner, in the dining-car. A man was with her—a fat, stolid but kind-looking man of unmistakable Hebrew antecedents. He looked at her with eyes affectionate as a spaniel's. She was gracious with him, but plainly was restless. She chafed under the gaze of the other diners. She ate little, John noticed—a lettuce and tomato salad with no dressing, a glass of lemonade and a bit of dry toast, that was all.

At the table opposite him, there was a little Dresden-china sort of girl, with big, frightened blue eyes and golden, silky curls. About eighteen, she seemed to be,



and obviously on her first journey alone. She looked about curiously, but shyly. As she met John's eyes, she smiled in friendly fashion, then as if frightened by such boldness, dropped her eyes hurriedly. A lovely pink blush spread over her little face and stained her milk-white throat.

Her face was vaguely familiar to John, and he wondered where he had seen her. He looked approvingly at her demure little figure, and contrasted it with the worldly-wise, full-blooded sophistication of Estrella Dumas. A dear little girl, he thought, and too young and innocent to be travelling alone. He would keep a fatherly eye on her. It would be a pity to have her become familiar with the Jezebel in black.

### The Midnight Visit

AN incident that night confirmed his opinion of Estrella in particular and all vamps in general. He had been smoking a mild cigar on the observation platform—Miranda had narrow ideas about smoking and he refrained from indulging at home lest he set a bad example to the youth of Rock Center—and in watching the white moon through a comforting mist of tobacco smoke pondered on the beauty of nature and the iniquity of men. Hollywood was lying heavily on his mind. The train suddenly slowed down to take on water, John looked at his watch and was startled to discover that it was almost twelve o'clock. An unchristian hour to be up, he thought, and started for his berth. As he padded down the car, a stateroom door opened cautiously, and a deep contralto voice whispered, "Let me see if the coast is clear. I told you not to come!" And a beautiful face framed in flowing, dark hair, was thrust out to view the corridor. John stopped still in the shadows. It was Estrella. And from her room came the fat, stolid business-man, tip-toeing cautiously on great, clumsy feet.

He kissed her bare shoulder as he passed, and she patted his face. "Good-night, you bad boy," she whispered. "Now tomorrow you simply must not come near me all day."

The man tip-toed his way down the corridor, swearing softly to himself as a lurch of the train sent him up against a sharp corner, and the beautiful face disappeared within the stateroom.

"I knew it. I could tell the minute I saw her she was one of those scarlet women! It's terrible. It ought not to be allowed! If that's the way movie people are. . ."

The next day and all the way until the train snorted its way through the orange fields and vineyards that prefaced the entrance to Los Angeles, John kept an eagle eye on Miss Goldylocks, as he called her. He warned her seriously against any contact with the Dumas female.

"I can't tell you why you mustn't have anything to do with her," he said gently. "You're too young to know such things. But your mother wouldn't want you to have anything to do with her, I know. Promise me you'll stay away from her!"

The white lids covered the blue eyes for a second, and her pretty face contracted. She was so moved at his concern. "I think you're thweet," she lisped. "You're perfectly thweet to think about poor little me." And he thrilled with virtuous pride at the admiration in the big, candid blue eyes.

The censors were met at the train by a committee from the studios, and were photographed with the stars by news-reel cameramen. Estrella Dumas was presented with a huge bouquet of roses—by her publicity man, some cynic said—and was snapped throwing kisses to the welcomers. Even the pretty little girl had quite a crowd to welcome her. A tall chap with a little sprinkling of gray about his temples caught her up in his arms and kissed her hard, while she kicked her little heels clear of the ground. Her father, probably, John thought approvingly.

Life for the next few days was hectic. There were banquets at which grape juice only was served, tours of the studios, meetings with stars on their best behaviour, endless photographs. Virtue was uppermost. Vice was as inconspicuous as at an Epworth League oyster supper. The censors visibly thawed under the hospitality. Even John began to think that Hollywood might have been maligned. Probably there were a good many nice people here, he conceded. In fact, everybody he had met since he came was mighty nice except that man-eater, the Dumas female. He always thought of her as the Dumas female, except when he thought of her as a Jezebel or a Delilah. She smiled at him once when he was on her set, but he only bowed coldly. He knew what he knew, and he thought of Miranda, played safe and moved away.

### The Voice of Evil

THEN came the day when he visited the set of Nigel Dana, the great director who was then doing his great biblical picture.

It was a bacchanal scene. A scantily clad maiden was pouring wine into the mouth of an even scantier clad youth. The purple liquid ran down the corners of his red mouth and stained his white tunic. A man clad in a tiger skin caught up a maiden, tossed her over his shoulder and ran away with her. He was doing this at the command of an assistant director, who couldn't be satisfied with his manner.

"My God, you with the tiger skin," he bellowed. "Can't you sheik that girl more realistically than that? You're in love with her, you desire her! She's yours, now take her! Pick her up. . . Oh, hell!"

"Well, say she's heavy," protested the abductor, wiping away the sweat and mascara from his hot face. "She weighs 130, and I've carried her about a mile now. And it's too damn hot to sheik anybody today and enjoy it."

"Sssh!" hissed somebody. "Here come the psalm-singers. We will now turn to responsive reading number 310."

Dana, bald of head but keen of eye, was tearing what little hair he had left.

"Can't anybody act like a good man gone wrong? Can't any one of you alleged actors make believe you have been deceived into breaking your oath of abstinence? But of course not? Not one of you hams would ever even imagine yourself taking such an oath! I've got to have a drunken hermit! It's a big hit in the scene. A whole situation turns on it. I've got to get me a . . . Say, who's that chap? The old pappy with the pious expression and the celluloid collar. . . over there, you idiot, standing by the water-cooler."

"Where? Oh, that man! Why chief, that's one of the censors come out to clean up Hollywood."

"A censor? You mean it? My God, he'd never play a drunken hermit! But he's just the type. Exactly the type. I wonder. . . Come on. . ." and Dana walked over to John.

"My dear chap, I'm terribly glad you visited us. And how do you find Hollywood? Not nearly as bad as you thought, eh? We're just a hard-working bunch of men and women, just like the folks back in. . . Rock Center? Ah yes, Rock Center. Lovely little place. . . Ah, Mr.—er,—Greenwood, you are a church member, are you not? Yes, I thought so. It just occurred to me that you might find it an interesting experience to portray a little part in this picture. It is a biblical picture, you know, and this is one of the scenes from the Old Testament. . . the court of King Herod, in fact. We need a man just your build and—er—distinguished bearing to play the part of a man of God, a hermit. And my actors here do not seem to have the bearing, the . . . dignity, for the rôle. How about it, my dear Mr. Greenwood?"



### The Descent to Avernus

"WHY, ah, why, yes, I suppose so, if it would help you out," stammered John. "As long as it is a biblical drama. . . We put on a little Christmas play at church once in which I portrayed the part of one of the shepherds, and they all said I did very well, very well indeed. What would I have to do?"

"Oh, all you would have to do would be to drink some of this er, nectar. . . a light beverage much used by the early Hebrews and made of the pure juice of the grapes. You would be overcome. . ."

"Not—drunk, surely?" and John straightened in offended dignity.

"Drunk? Oh surely, never drunk! Just overcome, what with the heat and all. An enemy has put some poison into the drink, you see, because you are a virtuous man and resist the vice of some of Herod's courtiers.

You see?"

"Yes, yes certainly. I don't see why I should not impersonate a hermit."

"Fine! Oh Bill, put Mr. Greenwood into make-up and put him in the costume of that make-believe actor over there. And snap into it."

"Shall do," cheerfully assented the assistant, and grinned as he regarded John. "This way, Mr. Greenwood."

As John disappeared, Dana turned to another assistant. "Jim," he said, "Take that goblet of punch and *spike* it. That bird won't be able to act, and we've got to make him look drunk because he is drunk. Empty your whole flask in it, . . . all of it, . . . there! If that doesn't put him under, nothing would. Look out, hide the flask, here he comes!"

John felt himself a bit conspicuous in his hermit's robes, but he congratulated himself that they were more



"Let's see if the coast is clear," Greenwood heard her whisper. "I told you not to come!"



adequate covering than the costumes that most of the actors wore. But then, he was a man of God, a constant rebuke to the revelers, Dana reminded him.

A couch was arranged for him, and a lovely, golden-haired damsel bound a wreath of roses around his head. Flowers in the hair of a hermit seemed a bit odd to him, and he thought that the wreath had a rakish tilt that ill became a religious man. But Dana seemed perfectly satisfied with his appearance.

As the girl fastened the wreath, she whispered in his ear, "I think it's so thweet that we meet again like this."

He looked up, and it was the little lady of the train, Miss Goldylocks.

"You here, in pictures?" he asked, and she smiled sweetly.

"I'm Dolly Dimples and I'm starring in this picture. It was so thweet of them to give you a bit, don't you think? Mith Dumas is playing in this picture, too. She's the vampire. I'm remembering what you thaid, Mr. Greenwood, and I'm not having anything to do with her."

"That's a good girl," John said approvingly. What a comfort to see someone so sweet and innocent in the movies! There were *many* nice things about Hollywood, he felt.

### A Typical Hollywood Revel

TEN minutes later, the stage was set for the bacchanal scene. The perspiring lover once more prepared to seize his reluctant maiden-captive; the girl poured more wine over her lover; dancers pranced about, flinging their bare arms and legs in wild abandon. And John, his hermit's costume slightly awry, reclined on a couch and partook of the nectar served him by a lovely cup-bearer.

"Pure juice of the grape", he mused. "A lovely goblet, offered by a lovely maiden. Paul himself might well have quaffed of such an inviting drink as this nectar." He quaffed again, and deeper. The liquid burned like fire, but left behind a curiously warm and comforting sensation. A feeling of well-being came over him, a mellowness that made him look with less disfavor on the prancing, dancing girls. He quaffed again. The goblet was empty. He held it high, and gazed at it with warm eyes. Strange, the goblet moved; the figures on the frieze about the rim came to life and danced their graceful way about the silver side of the cup. John felt interested but not particularly surprised. He dropped the cup, looked up and saw a girl slumbering sweetly on cushions beside him. He reached over and tickled a rosy toe. The foot jerked away and the whole thing tickled John immensely. He laughed uproariously, started up to pursue the owner of the toe, staggered and fell back onto the soft cushions of the divan. His head reeled like the merry-go-round the children used to ride on when the circus came to Rock Center. And then blackness. He slept. But the camera ground on, gathering a remorseless account of the incident for the amusement of the country and the horror of Rock Center and Miranda.

Several centuries later—or so it seemed—John awoke to the feel of soft, cool fingers on his aching head. At first he imagined himself at home, but Miranda's fingers, wrinkled and roughened with long years of housework, never felt like those smoothing some of the pain from his forehead.

"Dolly," he murmured thickly. Dear little girl, she must have been worried to see him collapse so suddenly. It must have been that heart attack the doctor had warned him about. But did heart attacks leave such splitting headaches in their wake? Or perhaps they really had put real poison in the nectar by mistake. Oh, he couldn't think! His head was about to split in two ragged parts.

"Dolly!"

"Dolly, me eye!" a rich, contralto voice answered.

"The dirty dogs, to spike the juice on an innocent old chappie like you—and a censor at that! I didn't think it of Dana!"

That voice! Where had he heard it before? He looked up and saw as through a glass darkly the face of the man-eater, the Queen of Sin, Estrella Dumas. Hers were the cool hands on his temples! His brain reeled while the voice went on.

"Here, here's some ice water. And a little of this aromatic spirits of ammonia will help the headache some. They certainly gave you an awful jag."

### "Was I Drunk?"

"J AG? Do you mean I was—drunk? Me, a pillar of the church. . . .?"

"You were drunk. Lit to the eyebrows, stewed, spifflicated. As pretty a drunk as ever I saw in a full and merry life. If the folks back in Punkin Hollow or wherever your home town is, could only have seen you! Maybe they will, when the picture is shown there!" And the prospect caused the stately Estrella to double up in ecstasy.

"Ooh," she gurgled. "Can't you see them all? The minister and the deacons and all the good brethren and sistern watching their brother Greenwood uplift the fillums by chasing a nymph to get her slipper to drink out of. You did that, too, you know! Can't you see them?"

John could. All too plainly he could see them! Nausea overcame him. He wanted to die. Groaning, he buried his splitting, burning head in his arms. The laughter in Estrella's voice vanished, leaving only a sympathy almost maternal.

"Aw, it's a shame. But don't you care. You were a hit, you were! It was a wonderful bit. And if you'd like more work, Dana will see that you get it. And when the picture is shown, if the censors don't kill the scene, you'll be in big demand among the studios. Stay in Hollywood, old timer. Nobody'll kid you here."

Only one phrase had caught his attention. The censors. . . would they really kill the awful, the shameful scene? Did she think they really would?

"Well, I *hope* not. I had three close-ups in the sequence and a lot of snappy action. And besides it's a biblical scene, straight from the Old Testament, and you can get away with murder if you film the scripture. But you never can tell. Censors are funny animals and you never can say what they're going to do. Oh, excuse me. I forgot you were one, too."

"I was one, but I'll never dare to censor anything again after this terrible affair. Maybe they *did* put poison in the goblet after all?" and he caught at the straw of hope pathetically.

"Sure, it was poison all right. . . to the assistant who had to give you his, at umpteen dollars a quart. But come on. I'll sneak you into the projection room with me. They're going to show today's rushes, and you can see for yourself."

Into the cell-like projection room they went. In the chilly darkness, Dana, his assistants, his camera-men, the art director and the stars in the cast watched the scenes "shot" that day run off. John looked with ever-growing horror as the evidence of his shame was unreel. Even the hard-boiled assistants snickered as the once-dignified "hermit" tickled the pink toe of a slumbering maiden.

"Oi, what a knockout! This scene will get a whale of a laugh," chuckled the first camera-man.

"You tell 'em. It'll knock 'em for a row of park benches, all rightie," agreed another.

"Jim, run that bit off again," ordered Dana, and again the scenes were flashed upon the scene. Again the hermit cavorted in drunken dignity. Again the little audience snickered.



### The Movie Germ Strikes

"YOU know, Mr. Dana," and Estrella spoke smoothly and significantly, "Mr. Greenwood's technique is excellent, don't you think? Such poise, such finely shaded emotionalism! You know, I think this bit will win him quite a bit of favorable comment among the studios."

Dana took his cue like a trouper. "I do indeed, Mr. Greenwood, you are to be congratulated. You are a real actor. Booth himself in his day could have handled that scene no more capably than you did."

"Really? You *really* think so?" John's shame began to leave him. Perhaps it *was* fine work. Come to think of it, no acting had ever held his attention so forcibly as this very scene. Perhaps he *was* a fine actor. . .

"Why, thank you, Mr. Dana. I have begun to think seriously of going in more for acting. Perhaps that's the best way of cleaning up the movies after all. If we give them good acting, you know."

"We"! Significant nudges and elbowing in the dark-

*"Sign here, please," taunted Dolly. John hopelessly put pen to the paper, when Estrella appeared. "I hope I'm not interrupting," she said sweetly, smiling at Dolly's look of hate*

ness. The heaven had begun to work.

"Precisely, my dear Mr. Greenwood. It is the quality of acting that needs improvement, rather than our morals. After all, we are merely hard-working people like yourself."

"Well, there's some whose morals could be improved!" said John severely. "But I ain't saying they're beyond redemption." He thought of Estrella and her midnight caller. She had her good points. She knew an actor when she saw one. But she was a vamp and a man-eater and she needn't try any of her tricks on him. He'd tell her so. "Now that little Dolly. She's a sweet, little innocent thing, a credit to the movies. Just as fresh and pure as a daisy."

"Why, er, yes, she is a fresh little thing. Gotta get back to the set now," and Dana hastily went out, followed by his assistants, who seemed to be strangely moved by some emotion.

During the weeks that followed, John eschewed the company of the other censors. He was working with Dana,





who had written in a part for him around the bacchanal scene. His letters back home glowed with the beauty of Hollywood, its purple hills, its orange blossoms, its boulevards lined with pepper trees, the stately eucalyptus trees standing like sentinels against the horizon at twilight, and of the people of Hollywood. There were a few bad ones and many good people, he wrote. Little Dolly Dimples, the heroine of "Daddy Dear", was an example of the "nice people". He was still heeding Miranda's exhortation to beware of vamps, he wrote. And indeed, he daily froze the overtures of Estrella Dumas.

"What's the matter with that old bird?" Estrella demanded one day of Gordon Grant, Dana's assistant. "Why the icy mitt and the fishy eye every time I pass the time of day? I gave him his first good opinion of himself as an actor, and now I'm as popular with him as the hydrophobia. I wonder why?"

"Search me. And look at the way he's fallen for Dimples. She'll have the gold fillings out of his teeth if he doesn't watch out. Heard her pumping him last night about his finances. Seems he's got a big farm back East somewhere and he's raising a nice gasoline crop on it. A gusher came in a year or so ago, and now they aren't growing alfalfa or mortgages on the old homestead any more. Jawn had better look out for Dolly."

"He couldn't look out for anybody, but I'm going to do it for him," said Estrella firmly. "Dolly and me has met before, and she lost a lot more scalp than I did. Watch my speed."

### A Word To The Unwise

ALL day Estrella angled for the attention of Greenwood. He would meet her eye nervously and then would seek the company of a group. He was not going to be left alone with a man-eater if he could help it. He was an actor, but he was still a good husband and a pillar of the church; but he had lost faith in his own strength. Deliver him from temptation, was his daily plea. Finally Estrella cornered him before the call-board.

"Look here, John," she said, "I hate to spoil anybody's game but you're a friend of mine, or anyway, I'm a friend of yours. I wouldn't pay too much attention to Dolly. She looks as innocent as a milk shake, but she's a fast worker and..."

"Now stop right there, woman," said Greenwood indignantly. "I won't hear a word about that nice little girl. Just because she's young and hardly knows her way about, is no reason for you to slander her."

"Young! Huh, why she's got..."

"I don't want to hear what you're going to say. Women are cats, believe me. I'm a married man, I am, and I don't want any women fighting over me, either. Just because I take a fatherly interest in this little girl who's alone in the world doesn't mean that I'm taking notice." And John departed with the air of having performed a necessary but unpleasant duty. Now, maybe the woman would leave him alone!

The woman leaned up against the call board and indulged in silent prayer. "My God, the man thinks I want to marry him!" she murmured when she could talk.

That night, Estrella worked late. Until almost eleven the white shafts of light from the Kliegs stained the blackness of the sky. She and Dolly had their big scene together, where the two women fight for the love of their man.

Over and over again they went through the scene, the adventurous and the pure little wife. Dana directed them with a running fire of comment.

"All right, Dolly, you're ill. Your baby is only a week old. Your husband has not come home. So you have come to Estrella's house to get him to come home.

Estrella has taken him from you. You hate her. Look as if you did, but don't forget you're a lady. That's good, hold it ....all right. Now Estrella, 'What are you doing here?' You advance on her threateningly. Dolly, you shrink. 'I come for my husband!' you say, Dolly. Stand up to her, but look frightened. That's it. Estrella, you defy her. 'He's mine, all mine,' you say. Now gloat. Gloat some more, hold it, hold it! Fine! 'What claim have you on him, save the mere bondage of a marriage ceremony? He is mine, by the right of Love?' You tell her that, Estrella, and exult. All right, exult some more, quite a bit more. Then you hold out the child, Dolly. 'By this flesh of his flesh, I claim him,' you say. Look pure, Dolly...oh, purer than that, awfully pure! That's good. That finishes you, Estrella. You're a vamp but you have your good point. Your love babies. 'A cheild,' you murmur and fold your arms on your breast. That's right. A cheild, his cheild. Flesh of his flesh!...About twenty feet of this, Tom. 'You are right. He is yours. Though it breaks the heart of me, he is yours!' Tears, Estrella, cry hard. Your heart is breaking. What's the matter with that orchestra? *Hearts and Flowers* there, you players. Cry now, Estrella, that-at's good, that's good, hold it, hold it, all right, cut!"

The scene was over. Yawning stage hands began to wreck the set. Estrella went to her dressing-room, anticipating her soft bed after a hard day's labor.

"It's a dog's life," she muttered as she smeared cold cream over her make-up. "Some day I'm going to get me an easy job, like taking in floors to scrub or something."

Throwing a wrap over her costume, because she was too dog-tired to change, she went out through the dimly lighted studio grounds to her car. A man, a rather fat, stolid but kindly-looking man was waiting for her.

"You're a duck to wait up for me," she said gratefully. "I certainly love you, you old dear, but what if somebody should see you? Just think, I ask you, what somebody would say if they were to drop in on me at the apartment and find you there? My poor reputation, such as it is, would be shot to pieces. My God, I'm tired!" and she yawned widely. But suddenly her yawn was broken off short.

### The Baited Trap

DOLLY was sweetly inviting John to ride home in her roadster. He accepted and the two drove off. Estrella leaned forward and spoke to the chauffeur.

"Follow that car," she said. "And step on it."

"What's the idea?" asked her companion. "Thought you wanted to get to bed. Since when are you little Mrs. Sherlock Holmes?"

"I have a hunch. There's more to this than meets the eye," said Estrella shortly. "Dolly lives way out of poor old Johnny's way, and when she goes to doing favors for anybody, there's a reason, as the breakfast-food ads say. I'm going to find the reason."

In silence they drove after the speeding roadster. Up Hollywood Boulevard to Fairfax, then south, swerving around corners at top speed, past the Rogers aerodrome and onto the road to the beach.

"What on earth! Where do you suppose she's taking that guileless old pappy?" asked Estrella, worriedly.

A roadhouse came into view. A roadhouse of dubious repute, with only a few lights showing. In front of the place, the speeding roadster slowed down.

"Turn off your lights," whispered Estrella to her chauffeur. "Get into the shadows, so we won't be seen."


Only a few feet separated the two cars, but a slight turn in the road and a low-hanging pepper tree shaded the second car from the sight of the roadster's occupants. The querulous voice of John came back to Estrella.

(Continued on page 91)



# THE YELLOW STAIN

*A tinge of yellow—and not even perfect love can bridge the terrific gap between the Occident and the Orient. A tale of mixed bloods fired by a beautiful and hopeless passion.*



*In her lonely tent on the desert Laura brooded on the secret which she must sooner or later reveal to Hawley—and her despair was as black as her eyes*

“I T’S make-up!”  
“Make-up! That’s nature!”

The girl under observation, whether by subtle instinct that warns the observed or whether she heard the low words, sent a quick glance toward the two men. Then she glued her eyes to her plate, and the slow color surged into her cheeks.

Vincent Hawley’s hand arrested itself in a movement to lift his cup to his lips. That slow, rich tinge of color was like the rose-glow of dawn upon a lily! His glance lingered, until he felt Bob Burton’s quick eyes upon him. He lifted the cup of coffee and gulped it down.

It was noon. The little café across the street from the main entrance to the studio of Federated Pictures Corporation was full of hungry humanity. Everybody, from the many millioned magnate who directed the fortunes of the huge Motion Picture Company to the rawest extra, ate there. The fleckless Panamas and well-creased trousers of the salaried players, with now and then the satins and sables of a female star, made spots of elegance here and there. But the most of the crowd were the rank and file of the picture trade—and some of them were rank indeed.

“This bally cook gets worse and worse every day,” said Hawley, pushing away a dish that he barely tasted.

“Day by day, in every way, he gets ‘worser and wors-er, eh?” grinned Burton.

Hawley groaned.

“Coué doesn’t mind, so why should you?” countered Burton. He was clean, and lean, and long, with the typically American directness of speech and manner. Hawley, more carefully groomed, more leisurely in manner, had that reserve about him, that reticence of lip and eye, that is characteristically British.

Under cover of the banter, Hawley’s eyes went again to the table where the girl sat. She was alone, and about her was an air of aloofness, as if she would be alone anywhere, in any crowd of people. What coloring!—

the black hair, the clear ivory skin, the almond eyes.

He stopped abruptly. It was the eyes that had caused the remarks between he and Burton. Was it the effect of the make-up? No! He was ready now to agree with Burton. That slight upward tilt of the brow had been made by nature’s own hand! And the eyes seemed slightly drawn upward at the corners, so that the delicate spacing of lid and brow might be undisturbed.

He went on with his portrait! The face was pure oval, and against the ivory-and-black of its other tints, the full and sensitive lips blossomed a sudden vivid red. Was it Latin blood that gave the delicate tint to the skin, that peculiar blackness to eyes and hair? Or was it an ancestor from the Southern Seas? Or—possibly—an Oriental strain?

Before he could settle this point, the girl rose from the table, and as she passed him on her way out, Hawley was keenly alive to the supple grace of her figure; noted the expensive simplicity of her dark street gown; caught the faint odor of a strange, exotic perfume.

Some instinct drew her glance toward him. Their eyes met. A swift current tingled over his nerves. He bent forward, only to see her eyelids flutter swiftly downward, while the wonderful rose surged again into the pale, ivory cheeks. And then she was gone. . . .

It was several months later that Harvey signed up for a picture to be produced under the direction of Shrove, Federated’s most famous director.

“How did you manage it, old man?” exclaimed Burton.

“Lord only knows, I don’t,” returned Vincent.

“Why you only got your first ‘bit’ three months ago, and you land a soft thing like this!” He glanced Hawley over keenly, and noted with new appreciation the straight profile and the keen, dark eyes.

“But you have a part yourself, Bob!” Vincent was saying.

“A part? Yes,—just one door removed from ‘atmosphere’!” snorted Bob.



## Again—The Girl

HAWLEY presently found himself out on location in the desert. For Shrove, with his quick instinct for the mood of the moment, was doing an Egyptian picture. Hawley had been cast for the Pharaoh.

It was the second day on the desert, after the tents were up and the whole elaborate mechanism of the undertaking settled into running order, that Vincent caught sight of a face that brought a quick thrill. He had never seen it since that day in the little café, but his mind had retained every delicate tint—every curve of contour.

The girl was clad in the brief draperies, the anklets and armlets of the ancient Egyptian costume. Her straight black hair, arranged to correspond, emphasized the slight slant of brow and eye. Again Vincent found himself wondering what strain of blood had produced it.

It was then that he learned she was to play opposite him! "Miss Tye, Mr. Hawley," Shrove said briefly, when he called them for rehearsal.

An outline of the scenes followed. Vincent's pulse quickened a little when he found that he was to go out into the desert to meet this girl, a daughter of one of the desert tribes, and make love to her.

The first scene was where Vincent, in the purple silk tunic and heavy gold mitre of the Pharaoh, came down the steps of the palace to mount his chariot and whirl off to the desert.

As he set foot upon the steps he noticed the girl standing near. His scene with her would follow.

He stepped into the chariot—the waiting grooms handed him the lines, when suddenly a puff of wind flapped a loose end of canvas on one of the tents. The spirited horses gave a leap, the chariot rose in the air and came down with a thud that expelled all the breath out of Vincent's body. Frightened, the horses made a wild lunge, and broke into a run.

Vincent managed to keep the lines wrapped about his hands, while actors and camera men and extras all broke into a mad scramble for safety.

But the girl—what was the matter? Didn't she see? Or was she too frightened to move? There she stood, directly in the path of the plunging horses.

Just to keep the reins was a thing of the utmost difficulty. To attempt to turn or guide the frightened horses, was an impossibility. His senses reeled for a blinding instant, and then he made a flying leap out of the chariot and onto the back of the horse nearest the girl—reached out, and lifted her bodily off the ground.

For a second they hung there, he with one arm around the neck of the horse, the other around the girl. To let go meant to be trampled beneath the furious hoofs. To cling longer was impossible. Gathering the girl closer, he summoned all his strength and made a spring. The next second they were rolling over and over together in the desert dust,—choking, almost insensible, but clear of the deadly hoofs.

## Real Heroism

BY THE time the momentum of the leap was expended they were surrounded by half a hundred wildly excited people, and were then rushed to the emergency hospital.

Dazed, sore, choking with the bitter alkali dust in throat and nose, Vincent opened his eyes to find himself stretched upon a cot in the hospital tent. With a dizzying rush of consciousness he remembered the leap. The girl—what had happened to her? Then he saw that she was lying on another cot at the opposite side of the tent.

He lifted himself on his elbow and looked at her. Her eyes were open—those almond-shaped, black, velvet-soft eyes that were so vividly imprinted upon his mind. They met his in a long look. And again, a swift current tingled over every nerve. Those black depths of light

seemed to hold something strangely alive; something that responded to a subtle call deep in his soul.

Words seemed trivial—out of place. Yet finally he found himself asking:

"Are you safe?"

"Yes."

"Not hurt?"

"I—I'm not sure."

The nurse who had been preparing some bandages, now returned, in time to hear his last question.

"Some bad scratches, and a few bruises. That's all."

Vincent gave a little groan of thankfulness and sank back upon his pillow. The contact brought a sharp stab of pain.

"This got pretty well split open?" he asked with a gesture toward his head.

"You landed on it," the nurse replied. "The cut is only a small one, but, I expect it's pretty sore."

He attempted to move his limbs—but stopped with a groan.

"How many broken?"

"None."

"H'm. Must be pretty badly bent."

"Bruised," she replied. "I'm going to bandage them now."

It was insufferably hot in the tent, and the flies buzzed about in maddening swarms. Shrove came to look over the victims of the accident and appraise the extent of the damage, as well as the probable amount of time that would have to be spent shooting scenes in which the two did not appear.

He expelled a huge sigh as he surveyed the bruised and bandage swathed figures. The expenses running into thousands of dollars a day, and the two principal characters laid up for an indefinite time! Let any one who dared, say that the life of a motion picture director is a thing to be envied!

He saw to it that everything possible was done for their comfort. But that was little at the best,—out there in the sweltering desert, where the necessities were luxuries, and luxuries out of the question.

Vincent realized this more deeply in the days that followed. For while neither of them had sustained any severe injury, the cuts and the bruises involved a good deal of suffering.

## A New Light

THE girl, however, seemed not to mind. There was a light in her deep eyes that glowed serene. And Vincent found himself turning to it each time with a new thrill.

They talked very little. She seemed disinclined to words. A look, a smile, a nod of understanding, with now and then a few sentences, were all that passed between them. But there was a reserve about her that appealed to him, as did her whole personality. She was so wholly unusual. There was something about her like the strange, subtle perfume that always clung about her garments,—delicate, elusive, tantalizing.

In a few days they were allowed to go to their own tents, with orders to report to the nurse daily for inspection.

Vincent missed the companionship sharply. He felt lonely—homesick. He walked over to her tent several times, but the flaps were always down.

One thing puzzled him greatly. She had never made the slightest allusion to the fact that he had saved her life. To have her pour out profuse thanks and bless him as her rescuer would have nauseated him intensely. That was the thing he had dreaded, with all the masculine dread of such things. But as the moments passed—and the hours—and finally the days—and she made no reference to the subject, he said to himself that it was distinctly odd.





"My love!" murmured the Pharaoh, as he might have murmured it in barbaric passion  
thousands of years ago beside the Nile



They were soon well enough to resume work in the picture. The chariot scene was relegated to some future time, so that Vincent's stiff and bruised muscles should not be put to a strain, and the love scenes were to be the first ones shot!

The first day went badly. The girl was cold—unresponsive. And Vincent found himself making stagey, ineffectual attempts to seem passionate.

Shrove shrugged a shoulder in despair; muttered "Rotten!" and signalled "N G" to be flashed before the camera.

"I think we'll try one of the night scenes tonight," he said briefly, when he dismissed them for the day. "And if you two can't wake up—"

He didn't finish the sentence, but they both knew what another scene like that would mean.

The afternoon stole purple and cool over the hot waste, and through the amethystine air came the warm, aromatic fragrance of the dried vegetation that sprinkled the alkali dust.

Through the warmth and fragrance rode the Pharaoh, the star-gold glittering on the purple silk of his tunic and the barbaric jewels about his neck. On—on to the tent beneath the lone palm. A girl came out of the shadows to meet him—their eyes met—with that indefinable thrill of meeting souls. And then their lips! Their arms twined close—heart beat against heart.

"My love!" murmured the Pharaoh, as he might have murmured it in barbaric passion thousands of years ago beside the Nile. And the girl of the desert, gave him all—her warm red lips—all the sweetness of those rounded arms that clung fast about his neck—

### Awake—At Last

"CAPITAL!" cried Shrove. "Now, we'll shoot it again, making your entrance from this side Hawley—"

Vincent's arms galvanized. The girl fell away from him. They stood staring at each other—startled, half-ashamed. It wasn't true, then? It was only a part they were playing? A part they were paid to play?

"All right, Hawley! All right, Miss Tye! Camera!"

But the director's tone fell upon deaf ears. The two stood there, gazing mutely into each other's eyes.

"I must know. Is it true?" demanded the man's gaze, welling up out of the depths of his soul.

"Yes," answered the almond blackness of the girl's eyes,—that blackness that glowed with a deep, inner light.

Their hands found each other's—clasped.

"Cut!" rang out Shrove's voice, sharply.

The cameras ceased grinding. And Vincent and the girl became suddenly aware that they were the focus of several pairs of curious eyes, and that Shrove was striding toward them angrily.

"That action is all wrong! We'll take the scene as you played it before except that you make your entrance from the right, Hawley, to give a better focus on Miss Tye as she comes out of the tent."

The two hands dropped quickly, but not before a message flashed from eye to eye.

"Pardon the mistake," said Vincent, turning to Shrove. "I'll come in again, making my entrance over here."

Again the gleam of the Pharaoh's jewels as he came to the tent beneath the lonely palm—the two figures that met—the glances that leaped and mingled—the warm embrace and the murmured caresses.

"Cut!" came the director's command—all too soon. Lingeringly they parted, and tried to still the tumult of their pulses to listen to Shrove's directions for the next scene.

This was where the girl, learning who her lover was, refused to leave the desert to go with him to his palace.

And he, for answer, picked her up, leaped into the chariot, and whirled away.

"Splendid!" cried Shrove, when the scene was finally shot. "Now, why the devil couldn't you two have played it like that before?" he demanded, as the three stood talking while the camera men packed their plates, and the property men gathered up their paraphernalia.

"Sorry," murmured Vincent, with a sidelong look at the girl's half-averted face.

"Tomorrow, try to remember to keep the scenes in the same key! Where's my car, Griggs?"

"Here's your run-about, sir," returned Griggs, the assistant. "Seems to be some mistake about the car for Miss Tye and Mr. Hawley. I'll run over with you and bring one back for them."

The two exchanged a quick look.

"Don't mind," said Vincent. "I prefer to walk over, and I believe, Miss Tye is willing to keep me company."

So the car spun away, followed by the loaded trucks, and they stood alone on the wide desert. Alone! With the new joy that bounded in their veins—the light that leaped from eye to eye—the sweet warmth of hand that touched hand, and lip that touched lip. . . . .

### Reincarnation?

"SOMEHOW, it seems to me that we have lived this all before," said Vincent, dreamily. "It seems as if I remembered everything—the desert—the pyramids—the palms—this fragrant night air—and you! I am that Pharaoh, and you the desert girl I love! Tell me, do you believe in reincarnation?"

"Sometimes," she smiled a little.

"It must be so! For there beside the Nile, in ages long gone by, you and I lived and loved—as we live and love tonight!"

"And, was the end happy? There, beside the Nile, ages ago?"

"Happy?" A chill in the word struck his sensitive ear. "Isn't it happiness in itself, to love like this?"

"Sometimes," she said, slowly. And again the sense of faint chill smote his inner ear.

"Isn't it the most beautiful, the most wonderful thing in life?"

"Yes." Her single word was very low—very slow. "It is the most beautiful—the most wonderful—thing in life."

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The days passed swiftly. Sun and wind by day—a purple fragrance and starry gold by night—both set to a rhythm of joy that made nothing of hard work and discomforts and long hours out in the pitiless sun—made the time all too fleet.

And so came their last night on the desert. Tomorrow the final scenes would be shot, the tents struck, and the motors loaded.

"Yes, Vincent, it has all been very wonderful—very beautiful," she was saying "I wonder if—" she stopped abruptly.

"If what?"

She did not answer for a moment. Vincent turned her face toward him. "Well, dearest?"

She clung to him with a frightened grasp: "What if—something—should break into this beautiful world of ours—and shatter it?"

"What could break into it?"

"Something—might—"

"We have each other—we shall always have each other! And that is what makes our world!"

"But, we know so little—about each other!"

"We know that we belong to each other! That is all we need to know."

There was a silence—one of those silences that speak more eloquently than words.





*And then his jaw dropped open—he took a step backward—stood staring. “My God!”*

### Premonition of Disaster

“BUT there’s one thing I wish you would tell me!”

She sat up suddenly and pulled away from him.

“What—is it?” Her voice was almost sharp.

“The first day, when the horses went wild, you didn’t try to get out of the way. Was it because you were too frightened?”

“No,” she said at last, slowly.

“Then, what—why—”

Again there was silence. He took possession of her hand, which had slipped away from him. It was very cold. He bent to look into her face, but she held it turned partly from him.

“Laura, dearest! What is it?”

Suddenly she turned to him and flung both arms about his neck and held him—held him hard, as though she was afraid he was slipping out of her grasp.



"Sometime—I will tell you. But not tonight! Not tonight! Not here where we have been so happy!"

### Laura Overhears

IT was close and uncomfortable in the stuffy little office of the Federated Pictures Corporation. Laura, waiting to see the manager, went over to the window and drew a chair where she could get a fresh breath.

The window looked out upon the "lot". Below it were lounging a couple of men with their make-up on, waiting for the call. They were smoking cigarettes and talking. Their tones were low—they were evidently discussing something of great interest. Suddenly their words caught Laura's ear.

"Doesn't Hawley know?" said one.

She turned suddenly white.

"I don't think he does. Though how he could help seeing it, is more than I know. Why, anybody could spot that slant of her eye-brows—the almond shape of her eyes."

Laura grasped at her chair. The little room was whirling about her.

"He's of a very fine, old English family," went on the first speaker, "brother married to the daughter of an earl, and all that sort of thing. Family fortunes shot up by the war—that's what brought him to America. Lord! His people would never get over the disgrace of it if he married her."

"Miss Tye!" called the office attendant sharply.

Laura heard it as from a long way off. She set her white lips, and tried to rise.

"Mr. Gross will see you now, Miss Tye," said the attendant.

"Tell him," she faltered, "tell him—"

The boy peered out and stared curiously at her tone. This roused her, and with a tremendous summoning of her will she rose.

"Never mind, I'll tell him myself," she said. And she walked into the little inner office where the potentate sat.

"Well, Miss Tye, we're ready to sign you up for Shrove's next picture. He says your work was splendid in the Egyptian stuff—"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Gross—but I can't sign." Her voice was scarcely audible.

### A Great Decision

"CAN'T sign!" Gross' big voice boomed out of his huge chest with a bang. "Somebody offering you more?"

"Oh, no, no! I—I'm going away."

"Eh?"

"I—I need a rest."

Gross shot her a keen look. "You do look a bit shot to pieces. Nerves ragged, eh?"

"Yes—yes that is it!" She was eager—to give assent.

"Too bad. You're an unusual type, you know. But—nerves will be nerves, I suppose,—even if they spoil a good chance," and he shot a meaning glance out of his little twinkling eyes.

"I regret it more than I can tell you." Her voice quivered suddenly; almost broke from her control.

"Well, well, have a good rest, and come to see us when you get back!" The busy man had already turned to his desk.

Laura stumbled out of the office, and down the steps to the street.....

### The Secret Revealed

THE little bungalow in the Hollywood hills was like a dainty nest, with the rose-colored glow of the lamp in the tiny drawing-room.

Vincent came up the path whistling. It was so like Laura, this secluded little place, with its daintiness and its charm.

The door opened at his ring, and he stepped in.

"Is Miss Tye in?" he asked, somewhat taken aback. Laura had not told him she kept a Chinese maid.

And then his jaw dropped open, he took a step backward—stood staring.

"My God!"

She paled, swayed, and would have fallen, but with a quick spring he caught her. He carried her to the lamp, tore off the rose-colored shade, and lifted the pale ivory oval of her face to the clear light.

She covered it with her hands.

"Don't! Don't!" she murmured, brokenly.

The shining black hair was drawn tight in the Chinese fashion; the almond eyes, the garments, silken, heavily embroidered, subtly perfumed—the blouse and pantaloons of a Chinese girl!

"Laura! Laura!" He shook her—dragged the hands away from her face. "For God's sake—what does this mean?"

She wrenched herself away.

"It means I—I—couldn't tell you—I had to—to let you see?"

"But you're not—"

"Yes."

A groan broke from him. He sank into a chair.

"My father is a Chinese merchant in San Francisco. He married an American girl. The white blood in me rebelled against the life of my father's people. I couldn't live it! I ran away from home, determined to make a life of my own."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"I—I couldn't—there in the desert—it was so beautiful! Love—love for me! Me, who had thought it a thing forever beyond me." Her voice choked.

He looked at her, speechless,—his face suddenly old and grayed.

"That first time I saw you in the little café, I knew I loved you! And I hoped I might never see you again—I could live on the memory of that fleeting glance when our souls touched. And then, out on the desert, when I learned I was to play with you, I was tortured with joy and anguish. I said I must shut my eyes—my ears—to your presence. Then, that day when you came down the steps of your palace, as the Pharaoh, and I knew you were coming to me, to make love to me, the knowledge struck a knife into my soul. I knew that love could bring me only anguish. And so, when the horses leaped, I stood still. I knew it would be better to be trampled under their hoofs, than to see—" she looked at him where he sat crumpled in his chair—"this!"

"Oh, my God!" he groaned, covering his face with his hands.

"And then, when you saved me; when I felt your arms lift me; when I felt the leap that might mean death for us both—I knew nothing else mattered. And so, I let you love me. I thought I knew what love would be, but there was no way of knowing the splendid, delirious joy of it—the joy that swept everything else away! I shall live on the memory of it all my life!"

A sharp sob cut her words. She controlled it presently, and went on:

"To-day, I knew it could go no further. I let you come tonight so that you might see. Now—you must go!"

### Unbearable Agony

HE SAT quite still.

"Go! Oh, please go!"

Slowly he got to his feet. He came and took her by the shoulders—looked into her stricken face.

"You should have told me—before," he said slowly.

"I know—I know. It was my fault. But go, now!"



please!"

"No!"

She drew back from him.

"Laura, this is a blow. I can't conceal that. But—I love you—"

"Don't talk! Don't talk! Don't let me listen to you!" she covered her ears with a frenzied gesture.

"You must listen to me! I love you, in spite of everything! You are beautiful, Laura! Your pale face is like an opening lily in its loveliness! I loved you the moment I saw you—"

"Don't! Don't!" she moaned, trying to break from him.

"I know what the world will say, Laura. But I am ready to face it. You are more than the world to me! We will be married tomorrow!"

"Vincent! Vincent!" she stared at him with wide eyes and parted, unbelieving lips.

"Yes! Tomorrow!" He tried to take her in his arms, but she pushed him back, frantically.

"Think what you're saying! Think what you're doing! Think of your family!"

"I will think of nothing but that: I love you!"

The black almond eyes shone; their light swept him with the old magic thrill. Her red, sweet lips were lifted to his—

Suddenly his arms swept her, not to be denied—his lips pressed hers.

"Oh-h-h!" With a moan she relaxed in his arms, drank in with thirsty lips the sweetness of his caresses.

It was late when he left her, and she stood on the veranda; the fragrance of roses and orange blossoms thrilling warmly through the night. He loved her! He loved her—in spite of everything! Her heart seemed almost to burst with its mad joy—

The sudden sound of voices came sharply from the street; the swift liquid syllables of the Chinese tongue. Two dark figures defiled, one behind the other—the servants from the house next door.

A third figure came up the street, unsteady of gait, and lurched into the first one.

"You damned Chinks! Get out of my way!"

### The Yellow Stain

THE swift deluge of excited Chinese that poured out did not reach her ears. She had shrunk back against the door, cowering, her head buried in her arms. That was her blood, the blood of her father's race, that flowed in the veins of those menials. She could see them now, as she had often seen them,—their yellow faces, their little snapping, black slant eyes, their lean cheeks—

She stumbled back through the door, and into the house. The room was full of the presence of the man who had just left it—the man she loved; the man who loved her! She held out her arms passionately. She would cling to his love—she would shut out this haunting horror from her mind!

Upon the smoking stand lay his cigarette case, where he had forgotten it. She picked it up. It was plain and unobtrusive in design—but it bore his coat-of-arms.

Before her mind rose the picture of a stately English home; of its inmates, proud with the pride of blood and name. Their conservatism, their sense of caste, were undimmed by reversal of fortune. She saw them seated in a stiff drawing-room, with a stiff footman bringing in a letter,—a letter from America, that told them the son and brother had married. And that the girl he had married was a—

A sharp cry of torture broke off her thought. Then she gathered all her will. Vincent loved her—she loved him! She would not let this hideous thing come between them. They would marry—they would live happily—

### The Only Thing Possible

AND the children she would bear him?

Slowly she grew ghastly and cold. They, too, those precious little beings that she would mother, would have the yellow taint in their veins! They, too, must be haunted all their lives by a shadowy horror. They, too, must know the torture of a conflict within their veins. They, too, must know the anguish of being outcast—of belonging to two races alien to each other, despised by each—

"Oh-h-h!" A long, low moan wrenched itself out of her very soul. She threw herself down upon the floor, and sobbed the night away.

With the gray, terrible streak of dawn she rose. She had been quiet now for some time. She was thinking.... thinking....

She went to the little desk took paper and pen:

"Dear Hawley,—

You will forgive me, I know when I tell you how much it has meant to me. But, now that it is over, I have to confess to you that it has all been pretense. I saw when we went to work in the picture that we would have to pretend to be in love, or we would fail. I let you think I loved you—I let you love me. My future depended on making a success with Shrove in this picture. And, last night, you seemed so terribly in earnest I didn't have the heart to confess. I thought my revelation would cure you, and when it didn't, I didn't know what else to do but go on pretending. Some acting, that! If Shrove could only have seen me!

I'm sending this by a messenger. I know you won't try to see me again. In fact, I'm going away, so it would be useless for you to try.

Believe me, I shall hope all good things for your future success and for your happiness.

Cordially yours, Laura Tye."

She addressed the envelope quickly, sealed it, and rang for a messenger.

## THE QUEEN OF THRILLS

This is the alluring title of our leading story in September **CONFESSIONS**—a story replete with action, love, interest and surprises. Don't miss this story—it is a pulse-quickener.



# GURGLING GOLD

**F**RED MILLWARD was standing on the curb near the Legion Stadium on El Centro Street one Friday

evening, about the most down-hearted fellow in Hollywood. Out of a job again. Why, it was no more than five weeks ago that he was head camera-man on the Empire lot and if it were not for the stubbornness and meanness of Art Concord, the studio manager, he thought, he would be still drawing the good old two hundred a week.

He remembered the fuss he had with the chief over the grade of film used and the fight that followed the argument. When Concord had been revived, his first act was to fire Millward. The youth was still lamenting his rash and impetuous act when he realized that Pelham Kingsley was standing in front of him and viewing with a queer smile the woebegone face. It was not the smile that twenty-five million patrons of the screen were accustomed to. It was a far more genuine but a far more puzzling smile.

## An Odd Offer

"**W**ELL Fred, why all the sad looks? Oh, I forgot. You beat Concord up and he black-listed you, eh? Let me see, I think I have something for you in mind. It's out of your line but you have the nerve to do anything. How about a nice little job of night-watching?"

"Or head-waiter at the Montemartre or grave-digging or personal maid to Pickford?" continued the other in scorn. "What's the swell idea? You don't see me with a cane or an ear-trumpet, do you?"

"Just a second, Freddie," the star said. "I'll take you back a few years. You remember when we did that plane-to-plane jump near Arcadia when we shot King of The Air in nineteen twenty? Well, when the second plane broke a wing and hit those high tension wires, I couldn't look at the sight. Instead, I turned my head and watched you crank the whole thing, explosion and all. You didn't waver a bit, but took every last foot of the uncalled-for action. Then, cool as ice, you opened the magazine, tore the film and threw the exposed footage out. I admired you for that performance. You saw the whole thing through and then destroyed the only physical testimony to an awful disaster."

Again the other interrupted, "Well, what has all that to do with a night-watchman's job?"

"If you think that the job I am going to offer you is a cinch, you are about to be sadly disillusioned. First of all, the place to be watched is my home. Second, it is the first time since I started my art collection that no one but the watchman will be there. You see, on all other occasions, at least five servants, including the steward, male cook and sometimes the chauffeur were there when I was absent. This time the whole gang has walked out on me and I won't hire another set until I return from Santa Barbara. And the third reason is, that I have just received that original Cortez that cost me fifty thousand in Paris last year. Now, I have two tickets to the fights and you better come along and discuss the matter with me."

There were ringside seats for the two and Kingsley, who was in high spirits, backed the favorite. After the bouts, he collected five hundred dollars from the stakeholder. Millward, at this point, ventured a question concerning the salary that he was to get.

Kingsley displayed the roll of bills and said, "I'll be gone for just one week, and, if at the end of that time

*In which an ex-camera man promises to guard art objects and finds himself in a startling situation.*

nothing is missing, I'll hand this roll to you."

"Yes, and what if someone goes south with that valuable picture of yours? What

do I get then?" returned his guest.

Again that tantalizing smile of Kingsley's.

"In that case all you will get is my most sincere thanks and your dismissal. In the meanwhile, you will sleep most of the day, read or play cards all night and eat as much as you can."

"All right Pelham, I'll take you up. When do I start?"

"You will begin tomorrow afternoon, as I leave in my car for Santa Barbara at four. Be there at half past two."

The next day at two, Millward left the Pacific Electric car at Hollywood and Gower and walked up the broad street lined with palms and eucalyptus trees. As he drew near the home of the star, he noticed the well-kept lawns and the artistic garden. Pelham Kingsley spent half his income on the upkeep of his home and the buying of art treasures. The pictures and other art objects that he had acquired in the last three years were worth millions.

He was on the spacious veranda when Fred Millward came up the walk, and greeted the youth with a look that still held the faintest trace of that challenging smile.

"Right on time," he said, while Boulevard Lux, his giant police dog, barked a joyous welcome.

Millward knew Lucky, as the dog was always called. He had been on location with Kingsley several times during the year that Fred had cranked for the Kingsley pictures. A strong friendship was the result of mutual liking. Lucky seemed to worship the camera-man even more than his master and Millward loved the dog for his clean beauty and graceful carriage.

The police dog was a half-brother of Etzel von Egonberg, otherwise known as Strongheart, but Kingsley never mentioned this. Lucky was a prize winner on his own account and needed the support of no other animal.

"Are you going to take Lucky with you?" asked Millward.

"Well, I really would like to, but you know what Ashland is like," replied Kingsley, naming his new leading woman. "She abhors the sight of a dog and I'm afraid she will fly into a temperamental fit if Lucky is around."

## The New Guardian

**K**INGSLEY then took the new guardian of his property over the grounds and the spreading bungalow. The "bungalow" consisted of twenty rooms. In every way it was the most elaborate home Fred Millward had been in for any length of time.

The library caught his attention at once. Here were housed the famed paintings and bronzes that he had come to guard. The Cortez that was the jewel of the collection had already been hung. It was the portrait of a young woman. A dark red shawl carelessly thrown over one shoulder was the only ornament to the canvas that showed the figure of the girl to the waist. The coloring was the whole attraction of the picture. In deep and somber black, the background accentuated the olive skin, pearly teeth and flashing eyes of the subject.

After impressing the wealth and importance of the objects in the room on the new man, Kingsley told him to spend most of his time in the combined salon and library.



"I've had this couch placed here so that you can sleep in the library. You will sleep during the day and guard from six until six in the morning. Here is a Colt. Remember the value of the things you are watching and if the occasion demands it, use the gun and shoot to kill.

"I'll be leaving now," he added, as his car came up the driveway. "But keep this always in mind, under no circumstances are you to leave the house. You will find plenty to eat in the pantry and smokes and some Scotch in the library."

With these parting in-



*Before he could fire a shot the mysterious visitor had been engulfed in the darkness*

structions, Pelham Kingsley handed over the house keys to the new custodian and walked down to the waiting motor.

Lucky followed his master and stood by the machine

until it had moved away, then returned to Fred, who closed both the grilled doors. The cool quietness of the entire place reminded Millward that he was to stay up the whole night and he found an alarm-clock and soon was asleep.

"I guess it would be best to feed Lucky and then chain him up," he said, when he awoke. When Lucky had disposed of his food, he was fastened to his kennel in the rear of the house.

"Good-night Lucky and let me know if you hear anything."



Lucky growled in assent and the camera-man returned to the bungalow. Here he ate and then went into the library. Finding a copy of "The Prisoner of Zenda" he read for several hours.

When he finished the book it was about a quarter past two and there was little to break the quiet of the neighborhood. The hum of a passing machine was the only interruption that came to Fred's meditations. About three o'clock, he heard the rattle of two or three heavy trucks passing.

When he next looked out of the window, the street light on the corner disclosed a dark, long shape about midway between Gower and the next street. There were no lights shown on the machines parked there and Millward's imagination at once took form as he associated the trucks that had crept past the house, the warnings of his employer and the mass that he was peering at through the darkness.

Examining his gun, the excited watchman made a quick circuit of the exterior rooms and satisfied himself that none had entered—yet. With nerves a-tingle, he waited for the warning cry that he felt Lucky would give. Waiting, waiting! A low growl, then came a bell-like bark full of defiance and eagerness.

### The Mysterious Intruder

MILLWARD sprinted down the hall, through the kitchen, and out to the garage. Here, against the garage wall had been built a kennel of large dimensions. The dog was out of his abode, attempting by powerful lunges to break the chain that held him.

As Millward hastened to free him, a coil of the iron chain circled his wrist, and when Lucky again jumped, the links bit deep into the bones of his fore-arm. With a grimace of pain, he dragged Lucky down and managed to rid his arm of the encircling menace and to take the chain from the dog's collar.

"Go it, Lucky, dog, get them now," urged Fred.

The dog sped into the gloom and as Millward made for the back door, he heard the scream of a man taken unawares. He reached the house and at once regretted leaving it, as he heard sounds in the front. Running into the library, he was just in time to see someone leave via the window. Before he could fire a shot the mysterious visitor had been engulfed in the darkness.

Everything on the walls and in the cases was intact. The only thing disturbed was the center table and its rug. These apparently had been moved about, for some books that had formerly been on the table were scattered about the floor. The rug and table were back in position but the hurried moving had left them both disordered. Breathing a prayer of thanks, Fred made sure that no intruders remained in the house and then returned to the library.

The queer invasion puzzled him. Anyone who dared to break in upon a house in the manner that the intruders had done tonight would surely be capable of ransacking it of its art works. That they should merely move a table and then leave was a mystery to Millward.

Only one other thing would have brought them, he reasoned, something of more intrinsic value than the art objects, something that could be disposed of easily. Gold answered both of these conditions and yet you would not shove a table around the room in search of—

A faint noise from the veranda stopped his conjectures. Again, that barely perceptible sound, a sort of shuffling that seemed beyond human making. As Fred strode to the door, heels off the rich carpet, the noise grew louder. He flung the door open and shoved the pistol in the face of—Lucky.

A much exhausted and dirty Boulevard Lux met his gaze. His heaving sides and bloody mouth gave testimony that Lucky had done a bit of defense work that would have been a credit to half a dozen Boston Bulls.

"You gave me a little scare, didn't you, Lucky?" said Fred as he locked and bolted the door.

Dawn soon came. Feeling tired from his long watch, the young man left Lucky in the reception hall and slept for several hours. The rest of the day was spent in various ways.

Reading, smoking and playing solitaire occupied the whole of the second evening, for nothing unusual happened.

### A Threat of Death

THE third day and early evening passed without event, also, but about twelve the telephone rang. Millward lifted the receiver and answered it. A gay, girlish voice asked for Pelham, and when told he was on location seemed very sorry that the star was not in town.

About two-thirty the phone rang again and when Fred answered a smooth, silky voice told him! "If you value your life, you will leave the house at once."

Before the watchman could answer, he heard the click of the other phone and his repeated shakings of the hook did not summon the operator until the call was past tracing.

He had seated himself on a divan with one of Kingsley's fine cigars when the telephone again rang. The same soft purring voice came over the wire, but before three words were uttered, Millward cut in and consigned the speaker with no uncertain directions to the nethermost regions of Hades. In a few moments the bell rang again. This time the receiver was taken from the hook and laid on the table and the transmitter was stuffed with a handkerchief.

Millward knew that in a quarter of an hour the operator would report the line out of order and he would not be disturbed again.

"Lucky," he remarked, "We don't have to read about exciting happenings. Why right here we find more adventure than in half a dozen Sherlock Holmes stories. There's been the mysterious midnight visitor, the treasure, the telephone warning and now what's going to happen next?"

"That's the kick, Lucky, dog, we don't know what's coming next. All we can do is watch and wait."

The rest of the night was comparatively peaceful, and Fred turned his mind to the events of the first night. He tried to find a reason for moving the table, but it seemed like a blind for some other trick.

He suddenly thought, for the first time, that something might have been hidden under the blue Persian tapestry. A systematic search of the floor under the table revealed nothing. The polished surface gave no indication that any article of consequence had been concealed there.

Fred, still pursuing his clue, searched the entire floor of the room until he came to the large case of bronzes in one corner. Here he was obliged to move the display with much care. The hardwood floor, with strips of wood laid diagonally across the room, seemed to reflect his disappointment until he saw a bit of wainscoting that projected from the corner. He fingered this for a moment and then pressed it back into place.

### Startling Discovery

WITH a click, a triangle of the floor fell from under him and only by clutching the edge was he saved from plunging into darkness below. By careful tactics Millward finally brought one leg up over the hole and then succeeded in raising his body to the floor.

Taking a flashlight, he walked to the opening and sent the rays into the secret chamber. A sight met his eyes that caused him to draw his breath with a gasp of surprise. Then bits of rumor, little snatches of gossip that he had heard, came to him.



He had always protested at these stories. Stories that named Kingsley in a ring of fashionable bootleggers. He thought that though Kingsley might play the game close to the edge, he would never step over the line and become a member of that hard-talking, hard-riding, and hard-drinking fraternity known as The Bootleggers.

But here the thing stared back at him, mocking his thoughts. Case after case of Gordon Dry, Old Taylor, Green River, Three Star Hennessy, Martel, Sunnybrook, Hermitage, Pebble Ford, Canadian Club, and the ever-present and popular Haig and Haig were outlined to the sweeping pencil of light.

There was tier after tier of cases. As Fred later discovered, there were over two hundred and fifty cases of good old hard stuff. The value of the stock he estimated at about forty thousand dollars. It suddenly dawned upon him that the men that had broken in were not after art treasures but after liquor.

"Hi-jackers were visiting us, Lucky, and if I'm right, they will be here again! Well, this time we know what it's all about and can be prepared for them." Fred climbed down to the hidden store-room. It was a large chamber and the cases were piled systematically in rows and classified according to brands. From the dirt floor to the secret trap-door an ingenious set of stairs had been raised. This staircase, though rude and unpolished, without rail or carpet, was probably the most expensive in America. It was entirely composed of case after case of famous liquors and well-known wines.

"Some class to this layout," Millward exclaimed as he made his way to the top.

Once there he closed the trap and replaced the exhibit of bronzes.

The following day passed with the customary visit from the butcher and the grocer's boy. Fred decided about five to take a cat-nap and he threw himself on the cot and closed his eyes.

When he next opened them, it was with a splitting headache and a saccharine taste in his mouth. He tried to classify that taste as he lay on the bed, too weak to rise. It dawned on him by degrees that some anesthetic had been given him while he lay asleep.

### An Unsuccessful Search

SHIFTING his gaze from the carved ceiling overhead, he looked at the wreckage that had been the library. Pictures had been thrown from the wall, statues had been grouped together on the floor and the costly bronzes dumped in a heap on the carpet.

Millward gazed at these for several moments and then moved his head so that the secret door came into view. From all appearances it had not been touched and a sigh of relief left his lips as Fred stumbled to the corner and opened the door.

"All safe here," he announced and then looked about the room for the dog. He was not there. Cautiously opening the front door, Millward found the dog, stretched out on the grass mat. Lucky had been chloroformed, too, and placed outside the door. Millward revived him with showers of cold water.

It was eight o'clock Wednesday morning and Millward had spent four days at Kingsley's home.

The major part of the day was given over to rearranging the library and its contents.

Another night passed.

The next day passed while Fred tried to sleep. In the afternoon a ring at the bell brought him to the door and he peered through the curtains to see a policeman on the other side. Fred was about to admit him when his eyes fell on the officer's badge. A week previous to his entrance to the home of Kingsley, Millward had been one of the interested onlookers at the big Police Parade. All of the officers had been issued new badges and

cap adornments but the man that stood impatiently on the other side of the door did not have these. His was of the old-fashioned variety that the Los Angeles Police had just discarded. Scenting some ruse, the caretaker did not open the door but walked into the next room and ignored the persistent ringing of the gong. This continued for several minutes and then he saw the supposed officer walk down the street.

### A Night of Thrills

THE night that followed was full of thrills for Lucky. He ran from one room to another barking and growling at some unknown and uninvited guest. The watchman was unable to see or hear the prowler. After a full twelve hours of chasing about the building without result, the man retired worn and weary.

He woke at seven to find the dog hungry and excited. Feeding both Lucky and himself, he set about to inspect the premises. He could discover nothing of interest and contented himself with the thought that his animal companion was mistaken.

It was a little after twelve that evening when he first heard the cry. It came from a point about a block from the star's home on the opposite side of Los Feli Boulevard. This street had been developed on the south side, toward Hollywood, but the other was covered with a dense growth of brush and rank grass. When Millward first looked at it he saw a small, red, glow of light. Someone had lighted the brush and the cry was, "Fire!"

In a remarkably short time the blaze had spread, until it covered a half-acre of land. Millward ventured as far as the front of the veranda and stood watching the conflagration. The wind was bringing it in the direction of the Kingsley home and as he was searching his brain for some way of arresting the flames he heard the distant clang of the fire bells and the ever-increasing shriek of the chief's siren.

A crowd of curious onlookers collected. Soon three of the department trucks drew up and began a quick combat of the blazing brush.

So intently did Millward watch the scene, that he did not notice the approach of three men until they had attacked him and borne him across the porch into the house. Here in the dim light given off by the blaze, the care-taker struck out at his foremost antagonist with a straight right that sent the other to the floor. The remaining two jumped on him, crushing him to the ground by mere weight. Once on the carpet, Fred found that nothing was barred among these fighters. One had grasped his right leg and the other managed to straddle his chest. They pounded at his body until he used his left foot in an entirely successful kick that put the receiver hors de combat. The man on Millward's chest found himself on the floor with two punishing fists pounding into his face and body.

The first of the attackers recovered his senses and started back into the fray. As he lurched toward the two on the floor, he was met with a ferocious set of long, gleaming teeth, that raked his upthrown arm and nipped the skin of his throat. Lucky, missing his pal from the front of the house had returned not one moment too soon. With a yell of rage the man retreated, then turned and ran out of the house.

Fred put the finishing touches on the man under him and dragged him by the nape of the neck and threw him out on the lawn. The third of the pugilistic trio was still unaware of the presence of anyone and the triumphant camera-man had no resistance from him. When the invaders were disposed of, Millward secured the door. Making inventory of himself, he found that he had suffered one broken wrist, one very puffed lip, two eyes that felt as if they were both swollen and blue, investigation verifying this guess, and one splitting headache.



With a towel draped about his head, and his wrist bound in make-shift splints, Millward spent the remainder of the night with Lucky, with a revolver on the former's lap.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed, "this is the last evening of the week. Kingsley will be back in a few hours."

It was noon before Lucky's patient watching was rewarded and the actor appeared. He took one look at Millward's face and grinned.

"They treated you a trifle rougher than I thought they would, Fred," he said. "Let's go into the house and talk things over."

When they were both seated, he asked for an account of the whole affair, and as soon as it was finished he rose and stepped to the camera-man's side.

### Millward's Reward

"**K**ID, you've certainly done well. Better than I expected and now I have something to offer. You are in on the little secret about my hidden treasure and I want you to continue to work for me. No, not guarding,"

he said, as the other started to protest. "I just received that stock ten days ago, and I haven't picked anyone to do the retailing for me. There's a lot of money in it for the right person and you have stood the test against that gang of hi-jackers very well. Are you willing to go in with me? If you do there's one-fourth of the profits in your pocket."

For a moment neither spoke and then Millward, his voice brisk, declared, "Let me get my hat and coat. I'm going down to see a doctor about this hand of mine. But I'll be back as soon as he will let me and we will get together over the Hollywood Who's Who and, Pellie, we're going to make out our first customers' list!"

THE END.

*Editor's Note: This is the first of a series of three "Gurgling Gold" stories—each complete in itself, yet all dealing with an amazing bootleg and blackmail ring in Hollywood. "The Black Book", the second of the "Gurgling Gold" stories, will appear in September HOLLYWOOD CONFESSIONS. Out August 15.*

*The remaining two jumped on him, crushing him to the ground by mere weight*





# MASKED JUSTICE

*Justice in a Greek nightie, toying with a pair of scales is a familiar sight; but whoever saw or heard of Justice in the guise of a second-story man, Justice behind a burglar's mask? Yes, Hollywood has even that!*

"NOW, Katherine, he's going away. He's the man you love, but you won't let him see that—you're proud and haughty as you bid him Goodbye. He walks to the door. He turns and reaches out his hands to you—but you pretend not to see him. You've got to keep from breaking down, got to pretend for a moment longer.

"Now he's gone. You sink down beside the table, and you give way to your grief. He's gone. You've sent him away—and it's killing you—breaking your heart."

From outside the glaring circle of the Kleig lights the low voice of my director-husband came to me, urging me to new heights of emotional interpretation. From outside the circle came, too, the yearning throb of orchestra music. I was scarcely conscious of what they were playing. I knew only that the soft sobbing of the violin, the echoing sweetness of the piano, the low tremolo of the saxophone, woke in me an emotional response which made the scene and the situation real to me, which gripped my heart and brought to my eyes a flood of tears.

I bent my head on my arms on the table, and my shoulders shook with sobs. I did not hear the steady clicking of the two cameras turned on the scene; the music became something felt rather than heard. I gave myself up entirely to my emotions until finally I raised my head, my eyes and cheeks wet with tears. The cameras clicked a moment longer, then I heard my husband's quiet voice:

"All right, boys, cut." He came and stood beside me. "That was magnificent, dear, simply magnificent," he said in a low tone for my ears alone. "Now a closeup, with the same intensity of emotion." In a moment the lights had been shifted, the cameras brought within a few feet of me, and the music began again.

"Now, Katherine," said my husband's low voice, and at once I was again under the spell. In my imagination it was he I was giving up, he who was going out of that doorway, never to return. And I loved him so, oh, I loved him so!

It was the last scene of the day. My husband had complimented me before on my work in emotional roles, but when, in the limousine a half hour later, he took me in his arms, his voice trembled.

"You wonderful, wonderful girl," he whispered.

## Depths of Love

I SHOOK my head, and smiled up at him from the shelter of his arms. "No, David," I told him. "I simply pretended I was losing—you."

I could feel a quiver go through him. He made no reply, but held me so tightly that the pressure of his arms was delicious pain.

Strangely, then, as the limousine rolled swiftly westward through Hollywood, I fell to thinking of the vivid contrast between my life with this man, and what I had gone through as the wife of Jim Brant. The memory of that experience hurt me keenly, but somehow I could not throw it off. I know now that it was probably

premonition, that subtle wireless that warns of impending events, but at that time it merely puzzled me, and made me, for the moment, unhappy.

I had married Jim Brant seven years before, when I was a struggling, discouraged little actress in New York. I think I was attracted, not by love of the man, but by the wealth and ease which he typified to me. At any rate, when he asked me to marry him, I consented.

I was not long in learning that Jim was a husk of a man, a mockery and a pretense. He was a dope addict, and he gambled incessantly, for big stakes. Sometimes he won, but more frequently he lost. And, when he lost, he vented his spleen on me, as though I were to blame.

I stood it as long as I could. For three years I went through hell. Then I learned that he had not been true to me, that he was having an affair with another woman. That was the last straw. I could stand anything else but that. I told him then all the things that had been so long in my mind to say, and I left him.

I meant to begin proceedings for a divorce very soon, but about a month after I had left him I learned that he had been drowned in a shipwreck off the coast of Mexico. The news was prominently featured in the papers, for Jim had been, because of his wealth and the sensational nature of some of his escapades, rather a spectacular figure in the life of the city. I could not help an intense feeling of relief at the news, for I had dreaded the divorce action and the accompanying sensational publicity which, because of Jim's wealth and prominence, would have been unavoidable.

Then, not many months later, came David Buckley. My eyes were clear now, not blinded by the glamour of wealth and social position, and I knew that here was the one great love of my life. And it had proven so, even more than I could have expected.

## Dinner for Two

THE limousine was moving swiftly and easily up the curving drive that led to our home in the Hollywood hills, and in a moment we stopped beneath the porte cochere. David stepped from the car, picked me up in his arms, and with a happy laugh ran up the steps with me. Peters, the butler, had seen our arrival, and opened the door.

David went on up the stairs, with me in his arms. I was tired, physically and mentally, from the emotional strain of the day, and it was pleasant to be held thus. Doubly pleasant when he bent to kiss me, as he set me down in my own lovely room.

We had dinner alone in the big dining room, in informal fashion and attire; and, in spite of our fatigue, we laughed all through the meal, like a couple of children.

David Buckley and I had been husband and wife for four years now. He had given me my chance in pictures, had trained me, brought out my best possibilities, and now was starring me in a colossal production which he himself had financed. It was a wonderful story with a great cast of high-priced and capable players, and he was sparing no expense on the settings.



David was putting every bit of his resources, and every ounce of his effort into the production. He had even mortgaged the house, so confident was he that the picture would be a success. The venture would make or break him, both financially and in an artistic sense. It would make or break me, too.

Tonight we were both happy; the work was going smoothly, and already, with the picture not half filmed, several big releasing companies had been around to make tentative propositions to David. The future looked as rosy as it is possible for a future to look.

But there was a tinge of worry in it, too. The expensive, elaborate scenes were yet to be shot. The first of these was coming on the morrow. Everything must go well and smoothly then, for the overhead on such scenes, with their hundreds of extras, is many thousands of dollars a day, and any delay or trouble costs a sickening sum of money.

David was going back to the studio that evening to shoot some minor scenes in which I did not appear. Before he left, he held me in his arms for a long minute.

"Goodnight, sweetheart," he whispered. "Today has been hard on you, I know. And I can't tell you how fine you were. Go to bed early, and sleep soundly, for tomorrow—well, you know how important it is, without my saying so. Goodnight, dear." He kissed me again, and went out.

### A Shadow Falls

I WALKED upstairs to my boudoir, undressed, put on a favorite kimono, and sat down at my writing desk to answer some neglected correspondence. I became interested, and forgot the passage of time, until I heard the voice of Marie, my maid.

"A gentleman to see you, madam."

Surprised, I looked up to see Marie holding out the tray, on which lay a note.

"At this time of night?" I glanced at the ivory clock on my desk, which marked exactly ten. "I wonder—" and I reached for my letter opener, and slit the envelope quickly. A card dropped out and fell in my lap, face up. Staring up at me was the name of James M. Brant.

I felt suddenly dizzy and sick, and my fingers were nerveless as I crumpled the card. "Jim Brant! Jim Brant!" I kept exclaiming, over and over, and I couldn't seem to control my lips. Then I straightened the card again, turned it over and looked at the back of it. "Got to see you at once," was pencilled there in a careless scrawl. I turned to the maid.

"Marie, I can't see anybody now," I began. "But—"

"I can't wait any longer down here," broke in a masculine voice in harsh impatience, and we both whirled to see a man standing in the doorway.

My head swam, and I leaned back against the opened desk for support.

"You can't come in here, sir," interrupted the perturbed Marie. "You mustn't—"

"You clear out, young lady." The man advanced to the center of the room, throwing his hat and coat carelessly on a chair. The girl continued to glare angrily at him, and would have stood between him and me if I had not said:

"You may go, Marie, it's all right." Then she left the room without a word.

The man grinned. "Nice maid you've got, Katherine. Sorry I couldn't have discovered her for you when we were—housekeeping. Maybe she'd have saved you from the ravening beast, myself, on occasion."

I ignored the pleasantry. I was trying hard for self control. "Who are you, and what do you want here?" I asked. My voice sounded strange and unnatural, as though someone else were speaking.

"Who am I?" My visitor drew a chair near the table, and seated himself. "You received my card, didn't you? That ought to be self-explanatory. If it isn't, you might take a good look at my handsome features. Four years is a long time, but I guess your memory will inform you that the card isn't lying. Eh?" He sat back easily, watching me.

### Cross-examination

I DID not reply at once, but continued to gaze at him. The face was certainly the face of Jim Brant, the manner of the man also. But it was so impossible! While I had not myself seen Jim Brant dead, I could not have doubted his death. The papers had been filled with accounts of it, for his life had been sensational.

"Well, why don't you say something?"

I straightened. I was beginning to recover some measure of composure.

"You say you are Jim Brant. Have you any proof, except that you look like him? Doubles, you know, do exist sometimes, even outside of fiction."

My visitor scowled. "Now look here, Katherine," he began, "I can prove it fast enough. I—"

"If you are Jim Brant," I interrupted him steadily, "you will be able to write his signature, as he wrote it, and in his handwriting."

For the fraction of a second he stared at me. Then he chuckled amusedly, and sat back, hands in his pockets. "Bring me a pen," he commanded. "I guess I can write my own name."

Without speaking, I placed before him my fountain pen and a pad of paper. He quickly wrote the name, James M. Brant. I held out my hand for the pad, and he tore off the sheet, and handed it to me.

"Guess that'll satisfy your highness I'm the real metal," he remarked easily.

I glanced at the signature; then I laid the sheet on the table and leaned toward him, my hands on the polished surface, my eyes searching his. "Jim Brant," I said slowly, "signed his name 'J. M. Brant,' not 'James M. Brant.' The writing is similar—but not the same."

He straightened angrily. "Oh, cut that Sherlock Holmes stuff, Katherine," he exclaimed. "A man can change—"

"Jim never called me Katherine," I interrupted him. "It was always Kate. Have you changed—"

With a snarl, the man leaped to his feet, tore open his coat and jerked it off. I stepped back quickly, the table between us, and a cold shiver of fear went through me. But the man did not move from his place. He was working at the cuff of his right sleeve. "I'll show you," he was muttering. "I'll teach you to doubt my word." He rolled up the sleeve, exposing his forearm.

### Staggering Proof

"THERE!" he cried triumphantly, leaning across the table, the arm extended toward me, you and your Scotland Yard tricks! Look at that arm! What's the answer, eh, what's the answer?"

I found myself clutching at a chair for support, and staring with the fascination of despair at the deep red birthmark on the arm held toward me. I could not answer him, for my breath seemed suddenly cut off.

For a minute that tableau held, and then, with a sneering laugh, the man drew back his arm and reseated himself. He rolled down his sleeve, and fastened the cuff. Then he took a cigarette from a silver-mounted case and lighted it. "Well?" he queried.

"Why, oh, why, Jim Brant," I burst out at him suddenly, "did you keep silence, when you knew I was about to marry David Buckley?"

"Huh, you flatter yourself! How do you know that I was even aware of it?"



"Don't pretend ignorance. You knew, if not at once, then long before this time."

He flicked the ash from his cigarette, and stood up. "I had my own reasons for waiting," he said harshly, "and what they were does not concern us now. As to my object in coming here tonight, that is quickly stated. I want you to come away with me, now, at once!"

"And if I refuse?"

His lids narrowed. "You won't refuse," he said significantly, and touched his coat pocket.

### Indecision

A sidewise glance at the little clock on my desk told me that David would be returning shortly. He would come to my room at once, at was his wont. Should I play for time?

But no, I could not wait. This man was armed and David was not—and if they met—My husband's safety left me but one recourse at the moment. I turned to my visitor. "Very well," I said quietly. "I will go with you."

He pushed the pad and pen toward me. "Write Buckley a note. Tell him it's goodbye forever. Tell him you've been deceiving him with a pretense of love. That sort of thing—you know. Write it, quick!" He too had noted the clock on the desk.

Sudden anger went through me. "I refuse!"

"What!" The barrel of his weapon gleamed in the light. "Do as I tell you—you cat!"

"No!"

### The Man in the Mask

WITH an imprecation he raised the revolver. A low cry escaped me, and I sank backward into a chair. Through the dim haze of my reeling senses I heard a sharp voice exclaim:

"Drop that gun!"

I saw my visitor whirl swiftly, with weapon raised. He stood for a moment, as if palsied; then the revolver dropped from his fingers to the floor, and his hands rose slowly above his head.

"Never saw that done any better on the stage," drawled a cool voice. A tall man with a mask over the upper part of his face had stepped from the shadow of the curtains. He strode quickly forward, a heavy automatic held ready for use. I noted that he was wonderfully groomed, and the easy grace of a trained athlete showed in every line of his figure. There was a grim half-smile on the clean-cut mouth below the mask. He bowed to me, removing his hat.

"Pardon my intrusion, Mrs. Buckley," he said, "but this situation seems to demand armed intervention." Stooping, he picked up the gun on the floor, and put it in his pocket.



"That was magnificent, dear, simply magnificent," he said in a low tone for my ears alone. "Now a close-up with the same intensity of emotion"



Mrs. Buckley doubted his identity, so he showed her the birthmark on his arm. Then he demanded that she go away with him. When she refused, he tried to enforce his demands—with a gun. And then I interfered." The speaker paused, toying with the letters in his hand.

In the silence, my husband's whispered exclamation was audible. The other man sat sullen, staring at the floor.

"And now," the speaker went on, "I shall set your minds at rest, good people, by stating that this man is not Jim Brant."

"I can prove that I am!" The man under suspicion was on his feet, fumbling at his sleeve. "This birthmark—" He stopped, staring into the muzzle of the automatic.

"You are out of order," quietly, "I have the floor." The other hesitated, then sat down, scowling.

"As I said," went on the man in the mask, "I knew Jim Brant. I was in that wreck which cost him his life. I saw his body washed ashore. And I don't think we have any ghosts among us this evening."

"But that birthmark?" I interposed.

"—is a fraud. I haven't seen it, but I venture to say that its proud possessor would hardly dare let me apply some peroxide and a little vigorous rubbing to that mark." He turned to his prisoner. "Will you submit to that test?" he asked. The man shifted uneasily in his chair, but maintained a sullen silence.

His captor smiled. "I thought not." Then, turning to us: "I suppose Jim thought there were enough skeletons in his family closet without revealing to you, Mrs. Buckley, the fact that he had a scapegrace twin brother, who was in South America most of the time. This," bowing mockingly, "is brother Joe. Some things improve with age, but Joe Brant continues sweetly the same from year to year."

### Further Evidence

WITH the definite lifting of that horrible shadow from my life, my self control gave way suddenly. I fell to sobbing violently, and in a moment I felt David's arm about me. When I had regained a measure of composure I saw that the man in the mask was holding a letter toward David. "Now that we have labeled this gentleman a liar and a crook, here is a document which may further interest you," he said. The note was in ink, on plain stationery.

"Pull your Enoch Arden stunt tonight," it read. "He's starting his big, expensive stuff tomorrow, and now's the time to throw a wrench in his gears. If you fail in this, you're done. It'll be your last job with me!" The note was signed "W. D."

To both David and myself the thing was clear in an instant. Walter Dodge, rival producer and bitter enemy of my husband, had written that note. He was known throughout the industry as an unscrupulous man, but we had not supposed he would go to such ends to ruin a rival.

"Dodge must be crazy, to put a thing like that on paper," my husband remarked. "His sting is pulled, all right."

"He figured probably that the note would be burned at once," said the man in the mask. "This fellow has been his trusted henchman. In my opinion he has done things far worse in the eyes of the law than what he planned here. Joe evidently felt that in case of failure tonight that note would be a valuable weapon to him against Dodge's threat to ditch him—so he forgot to burn it. Right, friend Joe?"

### A Last Attempt

"MIGHTY clever at tracing out the spider's web, you are," sneered Joe Brant. He stood up and leaned

forward across the corner of the table, his face close to that of the other man. "Well, you'll have time to figure out a whole lot of things—up there at San Quentin. You think you're incog this evening. Not to me, old top, not to me—" He broke off suddenly, and made a lightning grab for the automatic, lying on the table.

Quick as he was, the other was quicker. The reaching arm was caught in a vise-like grip. Steel fingers clutched his throat, tightening relentlessly. For long, terrible minutes, it seemed to us who watched, they stood thus, while the firm lips beneath the mask smiled and smiled, and the livid face of Joe Brant grew more livid, until his head dropped limply to one side, and his staring eyes closed. As his body sagged downward, a scornful push sent him reeling, and he measured his length on the carpet, where he lay inert. The man in the mask seated himself and waited.

I shuddered, and drew closer into the circle of David's arm. Fascinated, we watched Joe Brant struggle back to consciousness. Finally he sat up weakly, staring at his assailant.

### Glint of Steel

THE man in the mask stepped to his side and jerked him to his feet. He handed him his hat and coat. He gripped him by the shoulder, and the eyes behind the mask seemed to blaze through the narrow slits.

"Tonight,"—he snapped out the words like whip-cracks—"tonight you leave this city. You think you know me. Perhaps you do. But as for splitting on me—don't do it! You might be stricken with something incurable if you did. Now go! He opened the door, and Joe Brant's quaking frame disappeared from the room. The stranger turned again to us.

"And now," he smiled quietly, "I fear I've already overstayed my welcome. I had expected my visit here this evening to be concluded very quietly, very quickly, and—perhaps more profitably. However—"

"Man," my husband broke in, "jewels would be small recompense for the service you have done us tonight. The freedom of the house is yours—and welcome." His arm tightened about me, as we stood facing the stranger.

The other shook his head. "Thank you, no," he said. "I've been well paid in two ways: I've helped you people—and I've squared accounts at last with Walter Dodge."

"Squared accounts with Dodge?" My husband repeated, puzzled.

"Exactly," said the stranger grimly. "Years ago he swindled me out of everything I had. My wife"—his voice shook a little—"my wife died two days later. She was not strong, and the shock of it—" He was silent a moment. Then: "I tried hard to win back," he continued, "but everything conspired against me, it seemed. And so I became—what I am." He thrust his weapon in his pocket, with a quick, decisive motion. "I've prospered in crime," he went on, "but it's a hard business at best. Always a man feels hunted, driven, and at night there are horrid dreams of grim walls and barred windows. I'm going to quit it."

"Let me help you," my husband proposed eagerly. "I need men of your force and personality. You'd make an actor."

The stranger hesitated.

"Please," I whispered. "Please try." I couldn't help the tears which brimmed in my eyes.

The stranger smiled, and held out his hand impulsively. "I will!" he said.

He is a much sought player today, and very popular. You'd know him if I told his name. But for this story he must be simply "The Man in the Mask."



# STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

IF you want a nice, easy little job, don't edit a magazine which has to be illustrated with pictures posed by living models.

There's infinitely more to these illustrations than meets the eye. You see the finished print—a vamp getting in her subtle work, lying on a chaise longue, attired in a filmy negligée; you see a handsome man in a full dress suit bending over her gazing into her eyes. No, not bending, for that would hide his face from the camera. Anyway, you see the finished print, and you know this is one of those naughty stories about vamps or professional correspondents or blackmail, or something like that.

But, ah—making that illustration! The vamp arrives without a negligée. Yes, the man had said to wear a negligée, but can't she wear this beautiful, sequin evening dress instead? It is so stunning!

And the hero who is to be vamped has a dress suit, but it is being cherished by Uncle Benjamin, whose shop is adorned with three pretty gold balls. Won't this snappy golf outfit do just as well? These patent leather shoes won't show, will they? For the snappy dresser hasn't gotten as far as shoes in his golf wardrobe. He's acquiring it piece by piece, and the shoes just have to wait until the nifty wool hose are paid for. And the photographer, or art director—beg pardon, Mr. MacLean—just hasn't a chaise longue to his name.

Not so easy, huh? Even when all the players who promise to take part are on hand. But when half of them get a hurry-up call to play in *Scaramouche*, Rex Ingram's new picture, or in Tourneur's *The Brass Bottle*—two of the many big specials now in the making which have robbed us at the last minute of many of our models—why it's—choose your own word, but make it strong.

## New Casting Arrangement

THE Motion Picture Players Association is a "non-profit" organization, which means that all money that comes in must go out—for the benefit of the members. Each member pays ten dollars for a membership fee and a dollar a month dues. The other agencies charge no registration fee, but a percentage of every check received through their help.

M. H. C. Ells and Mr. J. Carroll realized at once the wonderful publicity for their members, and agreed to cast for all stories.

The reason is simply that the Motion Picture Players Association wants to do all in its power for its members. "And we won't stop at members," said Mr. Carroll. "If we haven't a type you want in our files, we will call in non-members."

Noble, eh? We thought so, and voluntarily offered to award a membership every month to the player among the non-members who, in our opinion, does the best work for us.

The first membership award goes to Elizabeth Rhoades, that character actress who played the role of the medium in *Ghost Hands* in the July issue, and who plays the landlady in *Cheating the Law* in the September number. She used to be quite prominent in pictures, but when the well-known slump came, she gradually lost ground, and is now trying very hard to re-establish herself. Good luck, Mrs. Rhoades! It may be interesting to you readers, from Portland, Maine to Portland, Oregon to know that Mrs. Rhoades has a crippled husband—both legs off above the knees—and a little son to care for. But Harold—he's terribly smart; only ten years old and

in the seventh grade!—is in pictures, too. Right now he is in Arizona on location, working in a Zane Grey picture.

## A Beauty Contest Winner

SCREENLAND MAGAZINE, which is the older sister of HOLLYWOOD CONFESSIONS, put on a beauty contest some time ago, and Gertrude Hennecke, a professional fashion model of Chicago, won the prize. And say, Gertrude is a real winner! But just turn back and look at the "stills" for *The Yellow Stain*. Gertrude is the girl in little white corduroy panties and an Egyptian headdress.

Looking for a leading man for Gertrude wasn't an easy job. He had to be famous, handsome and tall. And he had to be free to pose on the day we were "shooting".

The answer is—Craig Biddle! If you live in Philadelphia, we've already said volumes. If you read the newspapers, you know as much as we do about Craig. He's the scion of a millionaire society family, and he chucked college and the family feather bed to come to Hollywood, where he lived on free oranges and free air and free climate until the newspapers discovered him and put him on the front page of the newspapers and hence into the private offices of producers. Craig's been photographed by everyone out here who goes in for mugging celebrities—so why not put him into CONFESSIONS? He enjoyed making love to Gertrude Hennecke—nice, easy job, that. But there was one thing he fell down on. Literally fell down, or almost down. You see, we had a bright idea about illustrating that story, *The Yellow Stain*. We thought it would be simply grand to have the great big Pharaoh to pick up his little Egyptian love and run away with her.

Craig was willing—until he picked Gertrude up. Now Gertrude hadn't been in Hollywood long enough to be on a diet. She is now, all right! And Gertrude weighs 135 pounds stripped. Or in her little white velvet panties. And while Craig is six feet three tall, he's not much more than one foot wide. He hefted Gertrude, and a look of pained surprise crossed the classic Biddle features. What's this? The sweat oozed out of the aristocratic pores; the Biddle shanks, showing in manly splendor through a slit in the Pharaoh's velvet robes, trembled.

Finally we got it—after six attempts—only to find that Gertrude had moved a trifle and the negative was spoiled. So you'll just have to wag along without seeing Craig do the Sheik stunt. But look how devotedly he kneels to kiss her hand.

And the half has not been told about those pictures for *The Yellow Stain*. We were so engrossed in selecting the little white corduroy outfit and the great velvet robes and the crown and scepter and everything for the Pharaoh that we clean forgot to rent a Chinese costume from the wardrobe company which supplies us with what we can't make ourselves. And a Chinese robe and a Chinese headdress can't very well be faked on the negative, as we do lots of things—ships and Pullman cars and ocean waves, and things like that.

Not to keep you on the edge of your seats any longer, we simply lifted a picture of Lulu Wong, a lovely little Chinese girl, sister of Anna May Wong, who posed for *The Killer* in the June issue. Lulu was already all dolled up in Chinese outfit, and she looks enough like Gertrude to double for her anyway.



# FREE AND

## THE MOVIE MIRAGE

By HERBERT S. MARSH

SNAPPY SAM they called him  
Where he hung his hat at home,  
For he had a shape like Venus  
And a face below his dome  
That had no equal nowhere,  
From New Orleans to Nome!

CHIN the style of Dempsey;  
Eyes that knocked 'em cold;  
Lips that came from Heaven  
To make his sweethearts bold.  
Taking altogether  
Snappy Sam was the rage,  
And had them at his option  
At any given age.

"MOVE out West to Picture Land,"  
Said friends who knew him best.  
"They're looking there for talent,  
They need you in the West;  
You'll find there one big garden,  
Tall palms and placid pools  
Where sport the shapely mermaids  
Like fish in summer schools."

SNAPPY Sam—they missed him  
When he said Ta Ta to home  
And turned to Californy  
To see the vampires roam.  
In his mind he painted  
Weeks of blissful ease—  
Continuous performance  
Of dainty hands to squeeze.

TEN o'clock each sunny day—  
A short trip in his car  
To pose before a camera  
(A love scene with a star).  
An afternoon of luxury,  
An evening at a dawnee;  
Get up,—oh say—eleven bells—  
Too late, eh! What a chawnee!

ON Saturdays the salary check  
At least four figures wide,  
And then a snappy motor trip,  
Some beauty at his side.  
Snappy Sam they'd call him sure,  
Out in the Glowing West;  
Once begun, this screen career,  
His face would do the rest!

OH, tell me not in mournful numbers  
Life is but a flivver dream!  
Snappy Sam learned rapidly  
Things are not what they seem!  
For when I saw our hero next  
My eyes were touched to tears—  
I knew at once that all his hopes  
Were badly in arrears.

TEN o'clock, a Far North "set"—  
Ten o'clock at *night*!  
And Snappy Sam the center  
Of a good old-fashioned fight.  
You know the kind—you've seen 'em—  
A bar, a gun, a drunken brawl;  
The gal then pulls some hero stuff  
And bang! a free-for-all!

"FIGHT, you sapheads, FIGHT!"  
Came from the megaphone.  
"Black his eye, soak his nose!  
SAM, fight that gang *alone*!  
Now open up, let them in—  
They've got to knock you flat!  
Hey, Spike, come up behind that guy  
And floor him with a bat!  
Take it Sammy!—Attaboy!—"   
He went down like a log  
While the mob closed in around him  
Like the swirling Frisco fog.

ON Saturday—that salary check  
From which he paid his board,  
And made another payment  
On the super-special Ford.

SNAPPY Sam they called him  
When he brought his hat back home,  
And made a resolution  
Never more to roam.  
"Tired of the bright-lights,  
Right here's O. K. for me—  
There's nothing much in Hollywood  
As far as I could see.  
Made a lot of money,  
With not a thing to do—  
And so, my honey, dearest,  
I come back here to you!"



# EASY VERSE

## THE JOB

By *DERMOT FITZGERALD*

I WANTED a job and I sought it,  
I lied and I-toadied and fought,  
I told them I'd played back in England,  
On the boards where experience had taught.  
I wanted good pay and I got it,  
One hundred and fifty a week.  
I donned my grease paint on a Monday,  
And I felt that I looked like a freak.

NO! there's more to my miserable story,  
The job only lasted one day,  
When I got on the set, the director  
Gave a groan and then sent me away.  
He could see I had had no experience,  
For my courage had oozed and my knees  
Started trembling and knocking together,  
When he hollered, "Now camera! Please!"

THAT night in the gloom of my garret  
I counted the twenty "green-backs",  
Which he'd given me out of his pocket  
When he told me to double my tracks.  
'Twas the chance of a lifetime—I know it!  
Lifetime that is cruel and fleet  
Has no use for the fathead who hasn't  
The sense to keep warm his feet.

## MARY'S TALE

Mary wrote a little tale,  
'Twas in a magazine;  
Proud authoress was Mary, till  
She saw it on the screen.

Mary's tale on printed page  
In tenor was uplifting.  
But on the screen its tone was bass,  
With morals downward drifting.

Mary sought the guilty ones  
In Hollywood, to soak 'em.  
Alas, they tempted her with gold,  
And now she's writing hokum.

## ALIMONY DAY

CALL me early in the morning,  
Call me early, Mother dear,  
For tomorrow is my alimony day.  
Tradesmen surely can be vexing,  
Their accounts are so perplexing,  
And I'm sure there are a thousand bills to pay.

MAKE a list to help my shopping,  
Have it ready, Mother dear,  
For tomorrow is my alimony day.  
Bargain sales are so attractive  
And I've been so long inactive,  
That I feel like throwing all reserve away.

FIRST I need a new kimono,  
Something dainty, Mother dear,  
And you know I always favor baby blue.  
I must get some new cosmetic,  
(Twenty-nine is so pathetic,  
Although I don't look more than twenty-two.)

ALL my evening gowns are shabby,  
Quite impossible, my dear.  
I haven't got a decent thing to wear!  
I must renovate my figure,  
Hips are slowly getting slimmer,  
And they're cutting down the size of hats and hair.

DON'T forget to call me early,  
'Tis important, Mother dear,  
I must beat the other women to the sale.  
Lingerie so sheer and nifty,  
Lovely things for fourteen-fifty.  
So eject me after breakfast, without fail!

FOR I'm going to be married,  
( 'Tis a secret, Mother dear, )  
To a party not so very far away.  
Hence this awful rush and worry,  
Mother, Mother, can't you hurry?  
For tomorrow is my alimony day!



# TARNISHED GOLD

(Continued from page 46)

to a white heat the fire I had started.

Wayne's wire that he was coming found me cold. I did not want to marry him until he had made good. Anybody can throw discretion to the winds, but it takes character to stick to and conquer distasteful conditions and I felt that Wayne should finish his medical schooling and establish himself somewhere. Then I was willing to help him. His telegram came just after the director had notified the company that we were to go to California. I wired Wayne not to come.

## A Secret Marriage

IT IS not always possible, however, to hold back the deluge. Wayne landed in California just after we had started on our second picture. I was annoyed to think he had given up his profession when a few months more would have handed him an M. D., but my heart welcomed him, even though my head told me that he was a weakling. I wanted him to continue his studies in California, but he had no means of livelihood and would not accept assistance from me. His first "job", as I call it, for it was nothing more, was in the shipping department of a dry goods store. The salary was barely enough to keep body and soul together, and left nothing for the little pleasures of courtship. Wayne was too proud to let me pay for dinners and I was too tired to take long walks in the evenings. Park benches were too public for such intense conversations as ours, so to end the miserable situation we married. We could at least be together at night and go our separate ways in the day time. We both agreed that the marriage was to be kept secret until such time as he could earn enough to support me properly.

We were happy, Wayne and I, like two children secure in a safe harbor. Living was a struggle, for my work was not always continuous, but we had each other and we laughed at poverty and its camouflages. I foolishly believed that Wayne was safe from the pitfalls I had feared in the past. Alas! There are other wolves besides sex to ruin attractive young men, but I was quite blind to them. All I thought of was some way to advance Wayne in a financial way.

One day a new juvenile joined the caste and the idea flashed into my mind that Wayne was much better looking. The more I looked at Wayne the more I realized that he was a wonderful screen type. His clean cut features might have belonged to a Greek God and his sympathetic

brown eyes would photograph beautifully. I broached the subject one night at dinner. Wayne laughed at first, but gradually the seed took root. We talked for hours and with what knowledge I had of the studios, I volunteered to introduce him to the casting director and register him for extra work. I knew it wouldn't be long until his photographic value and personality would lift him higher.

As the casting director at our studio had been unusually nice to me and my future work depended more or less upon his humor, we decided not to spring a husband on him so early in the game. I felt that Wayne would have a better chance as a single man and that the marriage could be announced after he was a well known juvenile. Poor fools! Success founded on deception is worse than failure, but we did not know it then. We thought we were very wise and were doing the best thing for both of us. The title of our story should have been "Blind Babes".

## Up the Ladder at her Cost

WAYNE did well from the first. Everybody liked him, but it was a long time before he could rise above extra work. Several days each week he was idle, but even at that he made more money than he had as a shipping clerk. I introduced him everywhere as my "cousin" and vamped every publicity man and casting director I knew in an effort to make them remember him. Wayne did not like the necessity of this any better than I did, but he realized that success meant continual scheming. Finally, my friendliness with an assistant director won him a small part. I shall never forget the day Jack Forsythe said to me, "Trot your cousin around tomorrow—there is a 'bit' he can do if he has tennis clothes." Wayne had no tennis clothes when I went home with the news, but he had them in the morning. I made the trousers out of a linen sheet and the shirt out of a silk robe de nuit. He looked like a million to me—my handsome boy from Arkansas!

Everybody on the lot noticed him and commented on his good looks. I had taught him make-up at home and honestly Francis X. never looked better than he did. It was really the beginning of his career and I got it for him! That was the thought that thrilled me and paid me for my aching head and body, caused by lack of sleep.

Things looked pretty rosy just about that time, until the realization came to me that we were not always

to be alone. The thought terrified me. A baby—Wayne's baby! I wanted it, wanted it, wanted it—but how? People did not even know I was married and life was a struggle even with both of us working all the time. Wayne had to have nifty clothes to impress the casting office. I was desperate! Just when we were both beginning to get somewhere—to have this happen! We should have announced the marriage then, but we were both afraid.

The leading lady of Wayne's picture was decidedly interested in him and his next engagement depended upon her choice. It was much the same with me. I was fishing for a part in a film produced by a man whose son had all but told me he loved me. If we spoke the truth, both engagements might fall through and they were both so necessary now. I could not work much longer and the whole burden would fall on Wayne. We could not afford idleness. We talked until we were blue in the face and decided to meet the issue. We lived in a tiny cottage in Laurel Canyon. No one up there knew who we were, or that we were in the movies. I could announce a trip East when the time drew near for me to retire. This was eventually done and we got away with it beautifully, but we were handicapped otherwise. We were afraid to call in a physician, because Wayne was beginning to attract attention and the Doctor might remember him, so when the eventful time arrived I was bundled into a taxi and taken to the County Hospital. Wayne had been idle four weeks and we had no money to do otherwise.

What I went through that night no body will ever know. It seemed to be what they call a "clinic", with dozens of students standing around to learn and observe. To have to undergo my ordeal in the presence of twenty strange men was bad enough, but to have Wayne refuse to stay there with me was worse. He said he "couldn't bear to see me suffer"—a coward's excuse, for his presence would have helped so much. Even in my agony and humiliation, I realized that Wayne had failed me. It was the line of least resistance for him. Had he been suffering, I would have stayed by him if it killed me. Women are like that—and some men.

## The Sorrow of Concealment

LITTLE Julie kept me very busy for several months and I did not dare stir out of the house for fear I

(Continued on page 90)



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## The Jinx on Room 23

(Continued from page 16)

their interest in this, her prodigy, whose soul-filling playing of the *Largo* from Dvorak's *New World Symphony* gripped and held the listeners with its very melancholy.

In what seemed an all-too-quickly-ended moment he finished, the nuances of his melody drifting away as softly as the gurgles of water.

Then, with a quick stroke, he struck a harsh, strident chord that ran his hands lightning-like across the keyboard's entire length. It was a wild, and fearful and utterly dissonant sound that startled his audience. And when, with a sweep of his hand, he completed its cadence, he rose from his stool with a leap, as if something had frightened him.

Fire burned in his eyes. His forehead, moist with perspiration, contrasted sharply with the feverish, almost tinder-like dryness of his lips.

"Now," he shrieked, plunging his hand inside his shirt, "I weel die!"

A woman screamed.

But Felipe paid no heed. Head flung high, eyes glistening, he drew a dagger—a long, slender, polished Toledo blade that glittered in the light, —from the recesses deep within his shirt.

They found his sweetheart's picture hidden under his shirt, blood smeared and tear stained, its features almost carried away by the multitude of kisses rained upon it by him who loved her. I recognized her as one of the thousands of unsuccessful little extra girls who flutter like moths around the Kleig lights.

And on the back was her confession to her lover that told, only too sadly, of her betrayal by Old Man Lukins, for the sake of which she ended her own life.

The mystery of Room 23?

It is now almost a platitude, although at the time my comedy-star friend wanted to spend his honeymoon there I should have tried to prevent him from stepping into that so-called jinx.

But that is all past and gone. All over with. The erstwhile mystery has been completely dispelled.

For the weird lights seen by the neurotic Miss Callas were nothing more than phosphorus on the window curtain near the washbowl where chemicals used by one of the room's former occupants, the young photographer, had been splattered. And the phosphorus, which is lucent at night, shone when the curtains were blown about by the night wind . . .

And the eerie noises, the "voices of the spooks," as it seemed, came from a loose window shutter that occasionally blew loose from its hook and battled against a near-by awning.



# HONOLULU NIGHTS

(Continued from page 10)

Altho it was hard for me to give them to him, under the constant supervision of the doctor and nurses, as Farney grew more and more to depend on the drops, his cunning developed, and, not for a moment did the doctor suspect me.

Ah, wise little drops, that give a little, but take *all* in the end. Wise and wonderful Moki! Never was there a greater kahuna than he!

Ugly stories began to leak out as to Farney's true condition, and, after a hurried conference of the heads of the great film company, they decided that some drastic step must be taken, else the public would be sure to learn that their idol was a sot, an object cringing slave to some powerful drug, and they would lose heavily on his pictures.

The press agent was ordered to get busy. There soon appeared in one of Hollywood's leading daily papers a whole column describing the world tour Farney would immediately take. He was going to secure "atmosphere" for his next great super-production, which would positively be the greatest picture that he ever had made.

At my suggestion we booked passage for Honolulu, where, after an uneventful voyage, my feet once more trod my native land.

## Farney Decides to Stay

Farney's condition became rapidly worse. The doctor who accompanied us wished to take him back to Hollywood, but, when Farney learned that I would not go, he stubbornly refused to return. After much cabling the doctor bluntly told Farney, that if he stayed in Honolulu, the Golden Picture Company was thru with him forever. Still he refused to go back.

The disgusted doctor called me aside and said:

"David, I wash my hands of the whole affair. Farney's condition is disgusting. It is worse than death, by far. I will sail tomorrow."

Ah, vengeance was sweet! Alone with Farney at last. I told him who I was; why I, with royal blood coursing thru my veins, had been his servant;—that to make the world right for the little life now hourly expected, he would marry Telula.

When Farney realized how he had been trapped, all of the old fire and bluster came back. Fiercely he ordered me to leave. He gave me to understand that he would never marry Telula, or do anything else that he did not wish to do. He hoped I would understand that once for all and leave—leave before he was forced to put me out.

But how, as I started out the door, he cringed and begged, calling frantically for the drops, promising to do anything, to marry anybody, if I would just give him the drops. It was not a pleasant picture to remember, even if I had sworn to avenge the honor of

my family, which this man had dragged in the mire.

I took Farney more dead than alive back to our peaceful little village. Under the influence of a powerful stimulant administered by Moki, he was once more attired in clean linen, and I made up his face to look, as near as my poor skill would permit, like the Farney who had made such ardent love to Telula.

## Poor Little Broken Flower

Telula, like a lovely ghost of her former self, lay, with a little warm bundle on one wasted arm, her thin hand resting contentedly in Farney's nerveless grasp. Her bloodless lips smiled, and a look of deep peace was in her glazed eyes, as the kind hearted missionary made them man and wife in the eyes of the world.

As old Ruta, with streaming eyes, took the wailing babe from the arms of the mother, who never more would press it to her breast, Farney staggered to his feet looking vacantly around.

Gradually the effect of the stimulant wore off, and his every nerve cried out to be soothed by the magic of the drops. As he reached eagerly for the glass, in which his feverish eyes had watched me pour the entire contents of the vial, I dashed it to the floor.

In agony he threw himself to the floor and tried to lay up the precious drops.

His whining cry must, I felt, not disturb the last sleep of her who lay so strangely calm. As he groveled at my feet, like the cur he had proved, I picked him up and threw him into the night.

## Revenge Worse than Death

There he lay sprawled out under the canopy of the star-studded sky, an ugly unclean thing, that spoiled the calm beauty of the scene.

Shaking him until he gave a moan of pain, I made him stand on his feet. He trembled as with an ague and looked stupidly about. I pointed down the moonlit lines of palms toward the sea.

Farney's parched lips moved as he dumbly tried to beg for the drops. With a laugh of scorn I pushed him from me, sternly ordering him to go.

Falteringly, a haggard dejected figure, he stumbled forward and went toward the beach, where the waves ran high and broke in the thunder of the incoming tide.

At the water's edge he looked vaguely out across the gorgeous tropical sea, then falling forward, face down he lay on the wet sand.

As the Southern Cross gleamed brightly in the sky, an enormous breaker surged on the dim shore.

Oh, yes, I knew Douglas Farney—very well indeed.



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## BLIND VENGEANCE

(Continued from page 56)

dark room. Roger—Dr. Earle—persuaded me to go to Riverside with him. I told Phil I was going on location. We left Saturday, sometime around the middle of January, I can't remember just the exact day of the month. We drove to Riverside in Phil's car, and we registered at the Mission Inn as Dr. and Mrs. Roger Earle. We stayed until Monday morning.

Q. Did you occupy the same room?

A. We had a suite of rooms—a parlor, bedroom and bath. We—used the same bedroom—yes. Don't make me go into all this—I've told you—I've told the jury we were intimate—isn't that enough?

Judge: I think it is wasting the time of the court to require Mrs. Corley further to establish her relationship with the deceased. The only point yet to be proved is that Phillip Corley—the defendant—killed Dr. Roger Earle, the deceased, if he did do so—and that he was aware of the criminal intimacy which the witness and other witnesses have proved existed between them.

Defense: We are getting to that, your honor. (The chief lawyer for the defense, Mr. Calhoun, confers with his two assistants. I look up to see a worried frown on their faces.)

Judge: Proceed, gentlemen. We have already wasted a great deal of time. This case should have been concluded two days ago.

Q. Mrs. Corley, will you tell the court the events which led up to the death of Dr. Roger Earle, on the afternoon of Sunday, April 1, 1923?

A. Yes, sir. (Hand again pressed to trembling mouth, eyes downcast.) We were in the music room, Roger and I. He was bending over me, with his arms around me. I was sitting in a chair. Roger was kissing me, was saying, "Maryse, darling, when are you coming away with me? I can't stand this sneaking around, trying to avoid a blind man. Will you leave him, and come with me?"

Maryse Corley paused, dramatically. But as she paused a little bent figure came in, a heavy black veil over her face. Quietly Phillip Corley's Mother took her place beside him. I had my eyes off my notebook for once, and I saw Maryse Corley whiten and shrink into her chair as the little black-gowned figure glared at her, as she slowly raised her veil.

Q. Will you kindly go on with your story—in your own way, taking your time, Mrs. Corley?

the door open. I was looking back at Roger. But suddenly Roger stiffened and cried out: "My God! He heard us!" I looked up in time to see Phil standing, holding the door, a pistol in his hand. He was blind—is blind now—but he must have trained the gun from a sense of hearing, for he fired and the bullet hit Roger in the forehead.

There is a stir in the court-room. The long-expected accusation has come forth. I, of course, have been prepared for it. It has been an open-and-shut case all along—one of those unwritten law cases, with which juries in California are not quite so lenient as they are in the south. They usually give a man a second degree murder verdict in a case like this.

But—what is this? Again the little woman in black—the unassuming mother, has created a sensation. This time she reaches the witness, for she does not scream before she strikes. With her fingers on the throat of the terrified girl, she cries out, in shrill words that reach every ear in the courtroom:

"You liar, you murderess! You, you are guilty! I was dying of heartbreak when they told me Phil had done it, that you had said he did it to protect 'your honor'—honor! Oh, my God! Honor!"

The bailiff is at her side, tearing at those gripping fingers. The judge half rises. The witness shrinks toward the judge's bench, her eyes almost bursting from her livid face. But like a tigress the little old woman in black fights off the bailiff, appeals to the judge.

"I am not sworn in, Judge, but I will speak! Phil told me, when I was breaking my heart with grief—Phil told me the truth. Make him tell you the truth! Swear me in! These lawyers won't let him get on the stand—it's fixed so he can't talk, so all the jury knows will be what she says. Talk, Phil, tell them! She's not worth saying, Phil! For God's sake, Phil, tell them the truth!"

A half dozen officials at her—at the fighting, clawing little old woman—fail to stop her. She reaches the judge, behind the witness chair. She tears at his arm, tears streaming down her face. He raps with his gavel, but she goes on, regardless. People are standing all over the courtroom, fighting forward, afraid to lose a word. The armed guards are powerless to quell the uprising. But the throng is deathly still, to catch every word.

### He had Heard

A. Yes, sir. As I said, Roger was kissing me, and was begging me to go away with him. We did not hear

### The Truth

MAKE them let him talk, Judge. He didn't do it! She did it herself. She killed Dr. Earle, because  
(Continued on page 91)



# See How Easily You Can Learn to Dance This New Way

If you can do the step illustrated in the chart on the right, there is no reason why you cannot easily and quickly master all the latest steps through Arthur Murray's method of teaching dancing right in your own home.

**N**O matter how skeptical you may be about being able to learn to dance by mail, this new course will quickly prove to you that you can easily learn without a teacher on the ground to direct your steps—and without music or partner—right at home.

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## Learn Any Dance in a Few Hours

Whether you want to learn the Fox Trot, One Step, Waltz, or any of the newer steps you won't have the slightest difficulty in doing so through this new method. Then, the very next time dancing starts, you can surprise your friends by choosing a partner and stepping right out with perfect confidence that every step you make and every movement is absolutely correct. Arthur Murray guarantees to teach you, or your lessons won't cost you one cent.

### Satisfied Students Praise the Course

Let me say that your chart system explains many things to me which other teachers could not make clear.  
Wm. S. Meyerfield,  
Ann Harbor, Mich.

I practiced yesterday and learned the Fox Trot through the night. To-night I danced a number of times with a good dancer to the music of a phonograph and had no trouble in leading or balance.  
J. N. Mealy,  
Flatwood, W. Va.

I am getting along very nicely with the instructions. I have so many pupils I have to have a larger place.  
Albert J. Delaney,  
Bay City, Mich.

Before I got your lessons I couldn't dance a step, but now I go to dances and have a good time, like the rest of them. I'll always be thankful that I have taken your course.  
Beggi Thorgerison,  
Ethridge, Mont.

Many other enthusiastic letters have been received. If interested send for special leaflet reprinting them.

More than 90,000 people

have learned to become perfect dancers by mail and there is no reason why 90,000 more cannot learn just as easily. In fact, about five thousand people a month are becoming wonderful dancers through Arthur Murray's amazing new method.

### Why Good Dancers Are Popular

Good dancers are always the most popular people in their set—they never lack partners and are invited to every social event because dancing is the most popular form of recreation, and good dancers are always in demand. But beside this, good dancers always have perfect mental and physical control, ease of manner, poise, are never embarrassed, shy or timid. Very often they meet influential people in this social way who are very helpful to them in business.

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Arthur Murray has consented, for a limited time only, to send a special 16-lesson course to everyone who signs and returns the coupon attached to this page.

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Through his new, improved method of dancing by mail, Mr. Murray will give you



### FIRST PART of the Forward Waltz Step

1. Begin with left foot and step directly forward, weight on left foot.
2. Step diagonally forward to right, placing weight on right foot (see illustration).
3. Draw left foot up to right foot, weight on left.

That's all. Simply follow the numbers in the footprints. Master this part before going further.



the same high-class instruction in your own home that you would receive if you took private lessons in his studio and paid his regular fee of \$10.00 per lesson.

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How to Follow Successfully  
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The Art of Making Your Feet Look Attractive  
The Correct Walk in the Fox Trot  
The Basic Principles in Waltzing  
How to Waltz Backward  
The Secret of Leading The Chasse in the Fox Trot  
The Forward Waltz Step  
How to Leave One Partner to Dance With Another  
How to Learn and Also Teach your Child to Dance  
What the Advanced Dancer Should Know  
How to Develop Your Sense of Rhythm  
Etiquette of the Ballroom

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Mr. Murray is eager to prove to you that he can quickly teach you to become a good dancer in your own home. Just fill in and mail the coupon—or a letter or post card will do—and the special course will be promptly mailed to you. When your postman hands the special sixteen-lesson course to you, simply deposit only \$1.00 with him, plus a few cents' postage, in full payment. Keep the course for five days. Practice all of the steps, learn everything these sixteen lessons can teach you and prove to your full satisfaction that you have found the quickest, easiest, and most delightful way to learn to dance. Then, within five days, if you desire, you may return the course and your dollar will be promptly returned to you. But if you decide to keep the course—as you surely will—it becomes your personal property without further payments of any kind. To take advantage of this offer you must send the coupon today—offer may be withdrawn without notice. So mail Coupon NOW.

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Residents of England write to 150 Southampton Row, London



# TARNISHED GOLD

(Continued from page 84)

would be recognized. This made it very hard, for baby needed air and there was not enough room in our back yard to wheel the perambulator. To make matters worse, more and more movie people were coming into Laurel Canyon and only three doors away and a little higher on the side of a hill, one of Lasky's technical directors purchased a home. Several times, men from studios stopped and asked for Wayne and I had to pull my hair frowsily around my face and act the part of a slavey to avoid recognition. During this uncomfortable period, work was slack for Wayne and whenever he did land a "bit", it seemed to require fine clothes. In one picture he needed a dress suit and the shortage of food caused by this investment affected my ability to nourish Julie. It seemed as though everything was against us.

Three weeks on "location" took Wayne to Riverside and as his part was the best he had yet had, we thought he had better stop at the Mission Inn with the rest of the cast. We could not afford it, but doing so would place him more on an equal footing with the featured players and give him a chance for close acquaintance with the director. Wayne always won friends if he could show his best side. So I lived on nothing for two weeks and then decided to take Julie and run over to Riverside on Sunday to see Wayne. On the way over, the traction lines run through orange groves and in several places I saw signs calling for "orange pickers". This gave me an idea. I could pick oranges without fear of discovery and thus support myself and Julie, so that Wayne could live at good hotels and have the clothes he needed. At first Wayne would not consent, but when I told him that the doctor said I must get outdoors and have more nourishing food, he finally saw the point. To make a long story short, I went home, packed up necessary clothing and returned as an orange picker. I secured a young girl to care for Julie and to bring her to me every three hours for nursing.

## Happy in Helping

IT IS not necessary to state that I was happy in helping my boy up the ladder. My own health improved and baby picked up, too. The work in the open air gave me an enormous appetite and the knowledge that no one knew me relieved my mind. I fully decided that the thing to do was to announce our marriage as soon as I returned to the city. Wayne objected to this strenuously, begging

for a little more time to make himself solid as a juvenile, and finally we compromised by telling a few close friends. Wayne's director said that fan mail was just beginning to come in, and it would not be long before magazines would be asking for interviews. He thought until Wayne was thoroughly established and had a definite "public", that he would "go bigger" as a single man. Naturally, I was willing to do anything to advance Wayne, for my whole soul was bound up in his success.

It hurts to tell the rest of this story, for Wayne was only human and his failings very natural ones. My weeks in the orange groves had not helped my looks any and several times he mentioned my brown skin and hardened hands and once he said I looked like a native of the South Sea Islands. Nursing the baby, too, took a lot of my usual "pep", and housework was drudgery and left me limp at night. As Wayne enlarged his acquaintance, he was invited out to dinners and movie balls and he got into the habit of going alone. Until the baby was weaned, I could not leave her at night and besides if I were to appear, people would want to know my address and would expect me to resume my professional life. So Wayne advanced into the sunlight while I remained in the shadow.

All at once he made a "hit" in a feature film and then I began to notice vanity creeping into his conversation. Fan mail from women lauded him and his charms to the skies. At first he laughed at the letters and brought them home for me to read, but later he took them seriously and finally failed to bring them to me. I wanted people to appreciate him and I was not jealous, but I felt that he was gradually shutting me out of his success. It was mutual success—for I had worked even harder than he to make the name of Wayne Deforest worth something. The planning and scheming, the night of terror in the Charity Ward, the hard labor in the orange country, the nights of sewing that he might be presentable, the sacrifice of my good looks in his service—were these things nothing? Was I wrong in feeling that I had a share in his success?

When Wayne reached the "featured player" class the climax came. He was now making seven hundred dollars a week and his fan following was enormous. All at once he was ordered to New York. Julie was nearly three years old and I fully expected to go with him, but he did not seem to favor the idea. He said he wanted to make good in this picture and the presence of a wife and child would

keep him from concentrating. I assured him that Julie and I would amuse ourselves and would leave him to himself as much as possible, but he would not consent. He brought home a lovely coupé for me and moved us into a better house. I got a maid and prepared to live, determined that the time had come to reap the fruits of our struggle. Poor me!

## The Widening Gulf

WHEN Wayne came home I met him at the train in my new car. My cup of happiness seemed full. He looked so handsome—even distinguished! There was an air of prosperity about him that was very attractive. My heart pounded with joy. But it was not for long. Scarcely had the nose of the car pointed toward Hollywood than he spoke.

"Listen, Mama" he said. "I have something to say to you and I want you to be sensible. You have always had my good at heart and I know you will not stand in my way now. The truth is that I want my freedom. I have fallen in love with a wonderful girl who will do much for my career. She is young and beautiful and a star. Her people are worth millions. You are a good little woman, Mama, but I need someone more—well—ornamental. I will make a substantial settlement on you, and we can still be friends—" Thus he rattled on.

I do not know how I drove the car at all. I was stunned. Everything that was in me died. I could not talk even to protest, for in my inmost soul I knew that this beautiful shell did not contain a man. He was not worth clinging to—the idol was clay. I took him to a hotel and I went home to Julie. Like a dead thing I lived; like a dead thing I went to Reno for a divorce which would not bring hurtful publicity; like a dead thing I continued to exist. Wayne eventually married his girl of wealth and dimples. I wonder how many nights she would sit up to sew for him?

## He Wants Me Back

PEOPLE tell me that I should have "shown him up"—ruined his career by exposing him. But I could not do that, for my love for him was the real thing. I made his career, but I doubt if it brings him much joy. That he is unhappy, I know, for only this week I received a letter from him. He wants me back now—the irony of it. *He wants me back—he needs me!!*



# BLIND VENGEANCE

(Continued from page 88)

she saw him kissing her maid. Phil heard it all, then she begged him to let her have a chance—to let her fix the trial, so she would not be tried, but he would—on the unwritten law. She made him believe both of them would get off free. But I can't have it this way—I can't have my boy branded a murderer. I can't have it said this hussy saved him, when she has lied and cheated and ruined his life. She made him blind—that's true as gospel. Then she made him stand for her crime. Oh, Judge, for God's sake—"

Mechanically I am taking it all down, not looking at the words I am writing in purple ink from my fast-moving fountain pen. I am looking, as everyone else in the courtroom is, into the frenzied face of the fighting mother.

Then she faints, dropping like a shot bird as she cries out her last word. Her blind son rises and with tears streaming down his face, gropes his way toward her. Silently those who have tried to hold that little fighting figure give way to let him feel his way toward her.

As he passes the witness chair he pauses and raises his sightless face to where Maryse Corley huddles, in ghastly fear, against her chair.

"I'm sorry, Mary. I tried to help you."

Maryse Corley knew then that it was all over. She rises from her chair, a scream half stifled by that pressing hand at her mouth.

But the judge detains her. "Bailiff, take Mrs. Corley in charge. I will sign a warrant for her arrest."

# THE CENSOR AND THE MAN-EATER

(Continued from page 63)

"Are you sure it won't go? What's the matter with the car? Why did you bring me here, anyway? I said I wanted to go right home."

"The car simply won't go. I don't know what's the matter with it, but we'll go in here and have a bite to eat, and get somebody to fix the car for us," said Dolly sweetly.

"No, Dolly, we can't do that. This isn't the kind of house a young girl ought to be seen in. I don't know much of California, but I know that much. And it's too late for you to be gallivanting around....I'll go in and see if I can get help."

"Oh, don't be silly!" and the sweetness faded from Dolly's voice, leaving it icy-cold. "Besides, we can contract our business here. I understand that oil well back home is gushing nicely. I understand, too, that you're a married man whose wife would leave him if he got to running around with other women. So it might be embarrassing if you should be caught trying to seduce a young girl at a questionable roadhouse. Wouldn't it?"

"Why, what do you mean?" stuttered John, dazedly.

"I mean that I'd like a little check for about \$50,000. Here's a blank check on your bank; I looked it up especially for you. Wasn't I kind? Here's a fountain pen, too. Sign here, please, on the pretty dotted line."

"Why, Dolly, you're joking!" John could not believe his ears.

"Joking, hell! Sign and make it snappy, if you don't want me to scream! I've got some friends in

there that would be glad to swear that you were trying to force me into this roadhouse at midnight. The place was raided last week, by the way. Rock Center would be interested in that juicy bit about their pious John Greenwood, wouldn't it?"

John groaned.

"Probably the church would throw you out, too. Come on, old timer, your reputation is cheap at \$50,000. Hurry up and sign or I might raise my price." And she put the pen into his numb fingers. Hopelessly he put pen to the paper.

"Pardon me!"

Estrella appeared at the side of the car. "I see you are having engine trouble. Perhaps I can give you a lift home, Mr. Greenwood. My husband has his car a little way from here."

Dolly sat frozen into a furious silence.

"So sorry we haven't room for you, dear," said Estrella sweetly, "but I think your engine will be all right presently. I hope I haven't interrupted....?" and she smiled happily at the look of hate that Dolly shot at her.

## "Meet My Husband"

BACK in the car, John was presented to the stolid gentleman.

"Your husband?" he asked. "Why, he's the man I saw coming out of your compartment on the train. Is he your husband? I didn't know you had one."

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# THE WHIRLPOOL OF HATE

(Continued from page 32)

Fighting every inch of the way, and fearing with an almost paralyzing terror some unknown danger lurking at the edge of the veranda, I was dragged to where I could see the clear water of the stream as it flowed over glistening sand in the moonlight. I almost laughed in relief as I noted that the water could not have been a foot deep.

But my fears rested far too soon!

There was a great pile of logs, evidently cut for the enormous grate in the living room, stacked at one side of the veranda. Still holding me by one wrist he rolled one of these logs to the edge of the veranda and pushed it off into the water. I watched him, fascinated by his fiendish delight.

"Watch that!" he cried, and turned to look at my face.

## The Whirlpool of Hate

FOR a brief interval the log stood upright, the water breaking around its edges as if it were an island. Then, to my horror I saw the log showed less and less above water.

Five minutes more, and not a foot of the three feet of wood remained above the surface. Another minute and two inches still made tiny ripples—another and I could see the inanimate block being sucked under that treacherous silver bottom. In less than a quarter of an hour the sand was as smooth, the water as quiet as if no obstacle had ever ruffled its surface. And the sucking, swishing sound continued—only now, the awfulness of its meaning was clear.

"I won't hang," he sneered. "It takes evidence to hang a man. She knew it and now you do!"

In one brief space of time, I had solved the mystery of his hold on her at which all her friends and admirers had marveled for years. I pitied her more than I had ever dreamed it possible to pity anyone, and promised myself I'd do my part to help her escape if it cost me my life. When I thought of the horror and suspense that she must have endured looking into that awful pit, and how he had threatened her from the time she was a mere child in order to keep her working and paying—it was too dreadful to dwell upon!

"Are you going to tell?" he demanded. "This is your last chance."

He held me in a grip of steel, dragging me closer and closer to the water. I could see over the edge; could see those soft ripples and the smooth, deceitful sand. I know that I shivered in horror, though I tried hard to keep my feelings a secret. If I wished to save myself I would have to think and work fast.

He laughed evilly.

"No, girlie, it won't be a bit pleasant. The water's cold, and your teeth will chatter before the sand covers you up in its chilly blankets. You'll stay there till summer time when the creek bed dries up for a few months. Then the sand gets hot and pretty soon there's not even enough left of you for evidence."

He bent me backward over the water, until I knew if he let go I should fall headfirst into the water. A cold sweat broke over my body, and my skin crawled with the terror of it.

"I'll tell you—" I gasped. "Take your hand away from my throat—you're choking me!"

From past experiences, evidently such treatment had been enough to bring his victims to terms. He chuckled mirthlessly, and let go so suddenly that I had to fall on my knees to keep from tottering into the water. In a minute I had recovered. I made a dash for liberty.

With an oath he was after me, and then followed several minutes of dodging about that veranda that Jim Hawkins could never have equalled aboard a pirate ship. Any death would have been preferable to the one I faced.

My foot slipped on a piece of bark from that doomed log, and I felt that terrible clutch on me again. It was a fight to the finish now—life for life. I must not lose!

Back and forth we struggled. He tried to drag me to the brink, but I fought and wrestled until we were both panting like winded animals. My strength was slowly ebbing—but so was his. He had had none of his stimulant for hours, and I could feel that he also was fighting on nerve. This kept up my courage even when he succeeded in bringing me to the very edge of the water.

With a horrible death staring me in the face, I made one wild play for life. Without the slightest warning I relaxed my hold on him, and for a second of surprise he held me before shoving my body into the swirling water.

In that minute I bent forward and sunk my teeth into his wrist down to the bone. He gave a horrible yell and shoved me, but I was prepared and threw my full weight flat on the floor. I felt the cold water about my ankles for a horrible interval.

## Caught in His Own Trap

HE darted toward me, but too late. The same piece of bark that had tripped me paid him back in full for  
(Continued on page 94)

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Here is the most important beauty discovery of the decade! Terra-derma-lax will iron out and smooth away the most deep-seated face furrows—in an amazingly short time.

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Dirt-secretions at the base of the pores cause most all facial eruptions and skin-sallowiness. Terra-derma-lax goes after this imbedded dirt on the suction-cleaner principle. It draws out all the concealed impurities from the pores as a vacuum cleaner draws soot from a carpet.

This is no news to the users of Terra-derma-lax. It is a story gloriously told to them every day, by the radiant clarity that Terra-derma-lax has brought to their complexions.

Startling News Even to  
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But that Terra-derma-lax removes

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We waited until we were sure. And today we are sure. Scientifically sure. We have tested this new Terra-derma-lax usage under all conditions, on faces grooved and grained with worry-lines. And we have seen those lines diminish, day by day, and finally vanish entirely, under laboratory observation. So we have no hesitancy in warranting Terra-derma-lax unreservedly to eradicate all premature marks and seams from any skin.

#### How Treatment Is Applied

The Terra-derma-lax wrinkle treatment is applied daily—not semi-weekly, like the Clay facial. The clay is spread, like tape, in strip formation, over the wrinkled section—just before going to bed. In a few minutes, as it dries, it sets up a tingling sensation—denoting stimulated blood-flow beneath the wrinkled parts.

The tingling shortly subsides—and the clay is left on overnight. Like a sad-iron smoothing out a piece of crumpled silk, it smooths out the seams in the skin—holding the cuticle taut and

firm throughout the night.

In the morning wash off the clay—and the improvement is immediately seen. Repeat each night until the wrinkles, growing dimmer and dimmer, disappear entirely.

#### The Cause of Wrinkles

Wrinkles are caused not only by age, but by repeated bad facial habits—such as the arching of the eyebrows, the squinting of the eyelids, the furrowing of the forehead. These facial grimaces gradually form unnatural lines in the face, which quickly "set" if proper blood circulation does not wash them away.

Terra-derma-lax does two things to remove these unbecoming "expression lines."



It first smoothes out the creases in the skin, by its firm but gentle "ironing" action. And second, it restores the skin-health and life in the affected area by stimulating the blood-flow.

#### Results Are Guaranteed

Try this new and marvelous wrinkle treatment on our guarantee of quick and positive results.

Get a jar of Terra-derma-lax from your druggist (or from any toilette goods counter) and apply the wrinkle treatment three nights.

If you do not notice a decided improvement on the morning after the third treatment, return the balance of the clay in the jar, and your dollar will be refunded promptly.

#### A Double Delight to New Users

If you are not a user of Terra-derma-lax facials, there's a double treat in store for you. Get acquainted with the "beauty-sorcery" of these twice-a-week "clay baths." Supplement the nightly Wrinkle Treatment with twice-a-week Terra-derma-lax facials.

You'll be amazed at the new youth Terra-derma-lax will bring back into your face—the silky softness and schoolgirl full color it will return to your skin.

After the Wrinkle Treatment has conquered the crow's-feet—continue the Terra-derma-lax facials twice a week, to keep the skin in flawless condition. That's all the skin-beauty insurance any woman needs.

#### The Beauty Guarantee

MONEY BACK OFFER ISSUED WITH EVERY JAR OF TERRA-DERMA-LAX

Get your jar of Terra-derma-lax at any drug or department store. Use three treatments. If your mirror does not reveal to you a softer, clearer, lovelier complexion, return the jar and get your dollar back.



# Terra-derma-lax

THE ENGLISH BEAUTY CLAY

At all drug and department stores

\$1.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

If you are apt to be out when postman calls, enclose \$1 herewith, and jar will be sent you postpaid.

IF YOUR DRUGGIST IS OUT OF TERRA-DERMA-LAX, YOU WILL SEND YOU A LAX FREE FROM THE LABORATORY  
Send 1 to Money Simply Sign and Mail Coupon (A)

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329-337 Plymouth Court, Chicago

Please send me one jar of Terra-derma-lax. I agree to pay postman \$1 on receipt, plus few cents postage



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**BY DISSOLVING THE YEAST CELLS THAT MAKE AN ALCOHOL DISTILLERY OF YOUR STOMACH**



The fat in your body is caused by a simple chemical process.

Yeast cells in your stomach combine with starch and sugar and form **ALCOHOL**. When alcohol gets in the blood, fatty tissue is made instead of healthy, lean muscle. Fat people, even though they be **TOTAL ABSTAINERS** have four billion yeast cells (or more) in their stomachs—enough to make 4 ounces of alcohol a day. Destroy this excess of yeast cells and you immediately destroy Fat at its source!

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Dr. R. L. Graham's marvelous prescription, known as **NEUTROIDS**, destroys the yeast cells, stops alcoholization and reduces fat. No bother or inconvenience; can be carried in vest pocket or hand bag. Neutroids are composed of harmless ingredients that act only on the yeast cells that make you fat and not directly

on the body. Neutroids are personally guaranteed by R. Lincoln Graham, M. D., to accomplish satisfactory reducing results and, furthermore, they are guaranteed to contain no thyroid extract, no harmful laxatives, no dangerous, habit-forming drugs. Don't bother with dieting, baths or exercise when Neutroids will accomplish better results with no inconvenience.

**FREE PERSONAL MAIL CONSULTING SERVICE—by Dr. Graham's Staff**

R. Lincoln Graham, M. D., discoverer of the marvelous prescription known as Neutroids, although a practicing physician, has finally been prevailed upon to offer his priceless remedy to the public. He insists, however, that Neutroids must be only a **PART** of his fat-reducing service. You are to write him fully and confidentially, Dr. Graham, or a member of his staff at his New York sanitarium will give careful attention to your inquiries and write you a personal letter of advice. Anyone ordering Neutroids may use this service.



**SKETCH VISUALIZES MARVELOUS REDUCTION IN STOMACH YEAST CELLS AFTER ONLY ONE TREATMENT**

**SEND NO MONEY—SEND ONLY THIS COUPON**

Fill in and mail this coupon only, to my sanitarium. I will send you two full weeks' treatment of fat-reducing Neutroids. Pay the postman only \$2 (a small portion of my regular consulting fee) plus 15 cents postage. If the treatment does not effect a satisfactory reduction, return the empty box and I will refund your money. (Signed) R. Lincoln Graham, M. D.

DR. R. LINCOLN GRAHAM, care of The Graham Sanitarium, Inc., 123 East 89th St., Dept. 120, New York City.—Send me 2 weeks' treatment of Neutroids which entitles me to free professional mail consulting service and free booklet on Obesity. I will pay postman \$2 (plus 15c postage) on arrival of the Neutroids in plain package. I understand my money will be refunded if I do not get a satisfactory reduction from this 2 weeks' treatment.

Name.....Age.....Sex.....

Address.....Weight.....

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## The Wolf of Hollywood

(Continued from page 25)

### A Big Haul in Sight

I SAW plainly I had to get out of Hollywood. Betty refused to go with me. She was too much in love with the studio life. She was making good and getting decent money. Her pictures were printed in the newspapers, and sometimes in the film magazines. I couldn't drag her away.

However, she agreed to help me get the \$50,000 string of pearls that the "Duchess" de l'Of always wore when she played grand dame parts in the films. That was to be our last job in Hollywood, and if it hadn't been for Betty's carelessness—

Our plans, mine, I mean, were perfect. But Betty—some day I'm going to break out of here and kill her with my hands!

It is impossible to guess to what extent the brilliant brain of this criminal will carry him in covering his tracks—but in the final installment, next month, read how at last even he is outwitted by a motion picture machine.

## The Whirlpool of Hate

(Continued from page 92)

his treachery. He slipped—recovered, tottered—

Arms waving frantically in the air, he plunged off the steps.

I crawled to safety, shaking from head to foot. He struggled ankle deep in the sand, the water rippling to his knees. His ravings were terrible to hear, and I believe I would have helped him had I possessed the strength.

Slowly, slowly, he sank at first. Then, like the log, he began to be sucked in.

As long as I live I can never wipe out the memory of the next few moments—to me a thousand aeons.

Not until the sand and water choked his ravings did the horrible flow of curses, pleadings for help, bitter wailings and moanings cease. In my most terrible nightmares now, I can still hear him, and the picture of that ravaged, tortured face rises up before me.

Hours later I dragged myself away. It is still a mystery to me how I found my way home and into bed, where they found me next morning raving in delirium. For months I suffered with a nervous breakdown. My family and friends are still at a loss to know what caused it. Even in my unconscious state I did not give an inkling of my terrible experience.



# Love Madness

(Continued from page 38)

"A fool to give up Gordon Moore . . . as guilty as hell even if she *did* win her libel suit . . . he gave her the air . . . he wouldn't stand for scandal."

There they were. She'd heard so many that they were beginning almost not to affect her. After all . . .

Leta Gorham, the poseuse. Well, they'd always think it after that horrible scandal cooked up by Mose Simon's hideous old wife.

But, nevertheless . . .

A quiet dressing room. Semi-darkness. Late afternoon. An hour the same as countless others of the day. Dread. Dreary. Unwanted, yet inevitable.

A time for tears, perhaps, and many maddening memories. Soul agony. Remorse,—well, not exactly remorse,—but, instead, embittering anguish.

Away from the prying eyes lurking always on the "set" Leta Gorham could cloister herself for ever-so-few moments. Sanctuary. Perhaps communion with herself. At any rate, forgetfulness of the hateful world.

In a drawer of her dressing table she could always find them. They made her shudder, both of them. Yet, they fascinated her like the deathly lure of an opal mesmerizes a fire-worshipper.

One had her picture in it, and Mose Simon's. Under a palm frond in the Coconut Grove. The man holding her hand. Bent low over it.

The other altogether different. The rough, blurry likenesses of Gordon Moore and some fat, stodgy, ugly, horse-faced woman. Gwendolyn Gaylord . . . yes, that was the name. A golf champion, it seemed . . . married to young Moore, of the famous family.

A much-discussed union of two leading families . . . a honeymoon in the South Seas . . . romance, romance, romance.

A sigh. A tear. A biting of the lips. Memories. Bitter memories. The happiest of Leta's life.

But they were all over. Everything was all over. Subtly, suddenly, ended by the horrible picture of her with Mose Simon under the palms in the cafe.

Another sigh. Why worry any longer? Useless worry.

But why hadn't Gordon known that Mose Simon was only her attorney? Oh, why?

"Poor Mose!" she breathed. "So ugly . . . so kind."

She pitied him, but her thoughts roamed to the South Seas. Gordon. Happy there.

Perhaps he was right . . . oil and water . . . couldn't merge . . . never could. She should never have met him . . . he didn't understand.

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## Moles

**HOW TO  
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A simple, safe home treatment—16 years' success in my practice. Moles (also BIG growths) dry up. Write for free booklet giving full particulars.

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## WHY BE FAT?

When I can reduce your weight a pound a day **SAFELY, INEXPENSIVELY and PERMANENTLY** the only **NATURAL** way, leaving no wrinkles or flabby flesh as a result: this we guarantee. **NO DRUGS**, or starvation diet (you may have all you need to eat three times a day), the very simplicity of this method of reducing is what immediately appeals to your common sense.

I reduced myself 63 pounds in 2 months. That has been 9 years ago and I haven't gained a pound of it back. **THE REDUCTION HAS BEEN PERMANENT.**

Mrs. W. E. Nickerson, 112 Cook St., Spokane, Wash., lost 23 pounds in 5 days. Mrs. Blanche Smith, 2018 E. Mallon Ave., Spokane, Wash., lost 90 pounds in 4 months. Esther Corbin, Vancouver, Wash., lost 86 pounds in 28 weeks, **AND THEY ARE ALL MAIL ORDER PATIENTS.**

There is a scale of weight for every height and one needn't weigh one ounce more than what is normal for them. Don't carry around with you continually a load of ballast you can throw off like an old garment. **LEARN TO LIVE.** Look and feel 10 years younger.

*"Have your figure permanently Marshallled."*

## THE ELIZABETH MARSHELLE SCHOOL OF REDUCING

1734 Maltman Ave., Hollywood, Calif.

If you wish to reduce your weight, **SEND FOR FREE INFORMATION TODAY.**

Name .....

Street address .....

Town .....

State .....

**Mail Coupon**

**TO-DAY**

## The Poisoned Fountain

*(Continued from page 52)*

all the old thrill once more.

He shook his head.

"You can be rejuvenated," he said, "but you will be disappointed. You are sacrificing more than you will gain!"

I pleaded with him. I offered him all the funds I possessed.

At last I won him, but only for science's sake.

At once he put me under scientific reducing treatment; employed specialists to give me the newly discovered Steinach method which uses Roentgen rays in rejuvenation and restoration of the contours of youth. This is the method said to have been used by Miss Ward.

Then Dr. Maier began upon my face, employing all his skill as a dermatologist and cosmetic surgeon to take away every trace that had been left by the years.

When I emerged from the long weeks under his care, what do you suppose my mirror told me? That I could pass the screen test; that I could be filmed without any considerable softening of the close-ups to hide facial defects, a ruse to which many a celebrated screen star must resort.

Younger than Beatrice and far, far more beautiful! My beloved Beatrice, you were the price I paid for this second youth, yet as I brushed away the tear that thought brought, I knew that shortly she would be of age and could come back to me.

With youth and beauty again as my weapon I saw before me a new world to conquer, the wonderful undiscovered world of motion pictures.

"Will I conquer that world?" I asked myself with a prayer.

"And Francois?" I asked the lovely reflection in the mirror with that old ringing laugh of Juliet. "In dreams she grows not older," I quoted, "and at last he will behold me as he had dreamed of me all these years, 'still fresh and fair and young.'"

Pressing a kiss on the hand of my benefactor, Dr. Maier, I phoned for my car and whirled away to find Benton again.

To be Continued.

*Will she conquer that new world? Will she thrill the old lover as in years ago? What will Benton say? Read the sequel to this story of a woman's rejuvenation in the September number of HOLLYWOOD CONFESSIONS.*



# M. Ella Harris



BEFORE

Photo by Melbourne Spurr



AFTER

Photo by Melbourne Spurr

Photographs by Melbourne Spurr, Hollywood, who wishes to say that if there is any doubt as to the genuineness of the above photographs, refer anyone to him and he will show them the negatives.

MELBOURNE SPURR

6040 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, California

April 14th, 1923  
Apt. 101,  
718 South Alvarado St.,  
Los Angeles, California

## To Whom It May Concern:

This is a word of encouragement and advice to my fellowmen who look in the mirror and find that Father Time has brushed his not too tender fingers across their faces and left those telltale lines and shadows.

My mirror looked back at me and my heart sank, but not for long, for I had heard that wrinkles could be removed so I began to investigate the different methods I saw advertised.

I interviewed several operators and saw many of their patients, but M. Ella Harris at 1531 N. Bronson Ave., Hollywood, California, proved to me beyond a doubt, that she could positively remove wrinkles and all blemishes. She showed me a number of people treated perhaps only on one side, others completely rejuvenated, with their pictures taken before, which proved to me that SHE WILL SET YOU BACK TWENTY YEARS.

But the one whose face showed the most marvelous effects of M. Ella Harris' treatment, was Miss Irene Hobson, actress, and after seeing her who had been kept beautiful by M. Ella Harris for seventeen years, and still retained the smooth contour and unlined skin of youth, I WAS COMPLETELY CONVINCED.

M. Ella Harris treated my face about two months ago and I am entirely satisfied and received much more benefit than I had hoped. The mental effects have made me more happy as looking well makes one more agreeable to their friends. I will be glad to tell anyone who wishes to learn more of this method.

Yours truly,

(Address) Mrs. M. Steele,

Apt. 101, 718 South Alvarado St., Los Angeles, California.

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Also manufactures a splendid home treatment consisting of "Marvel Skin Tightener," "Special Double Astringent" and "Bleach Cream" which separately sells for \$7.00 but which will be mailed upon receipt of \$5.00, with full directions complete.

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Address .....

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# Finding "The Fountain of Youth"

*A Long-Sought Secret, Vital to Happiness, Has Been Discovered.*

*Alas! that spring should vanish with the rose!  
That youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!*

—Omar Khayyam.

A SECRET vital to human happiness has been discovered. An ancient problem which, sooner or later, affects the welfare of virtually every man and woman, has been solved. As this problem undoubtedly will come to you eventually, if it has not come already, I urge you to read this article carefully. It may give you information of a value beyond all price.

This newly-revealed secret is not a new "philosophy" of financial success. It is not a political panacea. It has to do with something of far greater moment to the individual—success and happiness in love and marriage—and there is nothing theoretical, imaginative or fantastic about it, because it comes from the coldly exact realms of science and its value has been proved. It "works." And because it does work—surely, speedily and most delightfully—it is one of the most important discoveries made in many years. Thousands already bless it for having rescued them from lives of disappointment and misery. Millions will rejoice because of it in years to come.

The peculiar value of this discovery is that it removes physical handicaps which, in the past, have been considered inevitable and irremediable. I refer to the loss of youthful animation and a waning of the vital forces. These difficulties have caused untold unhappiness—failures, shattered romances, mysterious divorces. True happiness does not depend on wealth, position or fame. Primarily, it is a matter of health. Not the inefficient, "half-alive" condition which ordinarily passes as "health," but the abundant, vibrant, magnetic vitality of superb manhood and womanhood.



Unfortunately, this kind of health is rare. Our civilization, with its wear and tear, rapidly depletes the organism, and, in a physical sense, old age comes on when life should be at its prime.

But this is not a tragedy of our era alone. Ages ago a Persian poet, in the world's most melodious epic of pessimism, voiced humanity's immemorial complaint that "spring should vanish with the rose" and the song of youth too soon come to an end. And for centuries before Omar Khayyam wrote his immortal verses, science had searched—and in the centuries that have passed since then has continued to search—without halt, for the fabled "fountain of youth," an infallible method of renewing energy lost or depleted by disease, overwork, worry, excesses or advancing age.

Now the long search has been rewarded. A "fountain of youth" has been found! Science announces unconditionally that youthful vigor can be restored quickly and safely. Lives clouded by weakness can be illumined by the sunlight of health and joy. Old age, in a sense, can be kept at bay and youth made more glorious than ever. And the discovery which makes these amazing results possible is something any man or woman, young or old, can easily use in the privacy of the home, unknown to relative, friend or acquaintance.

The discovery had its origin in famous European laboratories. Brought to America, it was developed into a product that has given most remarkable results in thousands of cases, many of which had defied all other treatments. In scientific circles the discovery has been known and used for several years and has caused unbounded amazement by its quick, harmless, gratifying action. Now, in convenient tablet form, under the name of Korex compound, it is available to the general public.

Anyone who finds the youthful stamina ebbing, life losing its charm and color or the feebleness of old age coming on too soon, can obtain a double-strength treatment of this compound, sufficient for ordinary cases, under a positive guarantee that it costs nothing if it fails and only \$2 if it produces prompt and gratifying results. In average cases, the compound often brings about amazing benefits in from twenty-four to forty-eight hours.

Simply write in confidence to the Melton Laboratories, 813 Melton Bldg., Kansas City, Mo., and this wonder restorative will be mailed to you in a plain wrapper. You may enclose \$2 or, if you prefer, just send your name without money and pay the postman \$2 and postage when the parcel is delivered. In either case, if you report after a week that the Korex compound has not given satisfactory results, your money will be refunded immediately. The Melton Laboratories are nationally known and thoroughly reliable. Moreover, their offer is fully guaranteed, so no one need hesitate to accept it. If you need this remarkable scientific rejuvenator, write for it today.







M. J. MCGOWAN  
McGowan Laboratories



# Scientist discovers *fat solvent*

*Reduce any or every part of your figure with amazing new Reducing Cream which melts away excess fat on any part of the body—slenderizing the figure to perfect proportions without drugs, exercises, diet, rubber suits or painful denial of any kind.*

...a single ounce of  
...your figure—here's  
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now pleasantly simple and easy for  
anyone. For I, M. J. McGowan, after  
5 years of tireless research, have made  
the discovery you have been waiting  
for. I can tell you positively how to  
reduce quickly, comfortably—without  
tiresome exercises, without stupid  
diet, without enervating salt baths,  
without rubber suits or belts. I can  
actually show you how to make a  
wonderful change in your figure in 10  
days' time or my advice isn't going to  
cost one penny.

If it is a threatened double chin that is  
making you give up white bread and  
potatoes—

If your waistline is keeping you away  
from the tempting bon-bon dish—

If your arms are too plump, your  
neck padded, your ankles bulging,  
don't worry—I guarantee to reduce  
any or every part of your body,  
swiftly and surely—without any pro-  
gram of painful self-denial.

My discovery I call Reducine—  
McGowan's Reducine. It is not a  
medicine, a bath salt or a course of  
useless gymnastics. It is a pleasant  
cream that you can apply in your  
own room, patting it gently onto the  
parts you want to slenderize. Almost  
overnight you will notice a change.  
A harmless chemical reaction takes  
place, during which excess fat is  
literally dissolved away, leaving the  
figure slim and properly rounded,  
giving the lithe grace to the body  
every man and woman desires.

## Results Guaranteed or Money Back

My reducing cream is sold under  
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all you expect. Indeed if results do  
not start in two weeks time you may  
return unused portion of jar, at any  
time within two weeks after you re-  
ceive Reducine and we will refund  
every penny of your money. This  
unparalleled guarantee makes you  
sole judge of results. You have  
nothing to lose and everything to  
gain by clipping the coupon now.  
Because the reducing ingredient is

perishable it is not practical to offer  
Reducine through drug or depart-  
ment stores. I insist that you get only  
the freshly compounded laboratory  
product put out under my personal  
supervision.

When you realize that many imitations  
of Reducine are now being sold at from \$3.50 to  
\$10 at retail, you will realize how astoundingly  
low is the price we ask. If you have tried old-  
time methods in vain and really want to reduce  
any part of your body, give me the chance to  
help you. You risk nothing. Money back if  
not satisfied.

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I am not going to ask you to send one penny  
with your order. Just sign coupon and mail  
today. By return mail I will send you a 1-lb.  
jar of genuine Reducine and you can deposit  
the small sum of \$2.47 (plus a few cents post-  
age) when the postman brings the Reducine  
Cream. If you expect to be away when the  
postman comes, enclose \$2.60 with order and  
Reducine will be mailed postpaid.

## IDEAL FIGURE CHART



12½"	A slender neck
35"	Well proportioned bust
25"	A trim waist
36"	Slim hips
23½"	Perfectly modeled thighs
14½"	Graceful calf
8½"	Dainty ankles

The McGowan Laboratories Dept. 343  
Jackson Blvd. at Desplaines St., Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. McGowan: I am willing to let you prove to  
me at your own expense, that your Reducine Cream  
will remove all surplus flesh from my figure. You may  
send me a full size, 1 pound jar, regular price \$5.00,  
and I will deposit \$2.47 (plus the few cents postage)  
with the postman, with the understanding that the  
full amount will be refunded to me at any time within  
two weeks after receipt of Reducine if I am not  
satisfied with results.

Name.....

Address .....

If you expect to be away from the house when the  
postman comes, enclose \$2.60 with your order and  
Reducine will be mailed to you postpaid.



# Can you . . . . . ?

Can you stand the scrutinizing glance of your admirers at the beach?

Can you wear sheer summer frocks which expose your arms, underarms, back and limbs?

You can enjoy the summer and the freedom of the beach if you are not tormented by a few unsightly, unwanted hairs.

Don't permit the use of ordinary depilatories to strengthen any hairs you have. Now you can destroy them by quickly and gently lifting out the roots with ZIP.

Women of judgment have learned to distinguish between surface hair removers,—and ZIP which attacks the cause under the skin.

# ZIP

IT'S OFF  
because  
IT'S OUT

## ENJOY THESE DELIGHTFUL PREPARATIONS

- Madame Berthé Superior Massage and Cleansing Cream—Guaranteed not to grow hair. Jar...60c  
Large size jar (½ pound).....\$2.00
- Madame Berthé Anti-septic Talc—Delightfully fragrant; absorbs moisture. Can.....25c  
Beautiful glass jar.....75c
- Balm-o-Lam—A FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH FOR YOUR SKIN. The new lemon lotion softens and whitens the skin. Bottle.....75c
- Ab-Scent—The ideal liquid deodorant. Removes excessive perspiration. Destroys odors harmlessly. Colorless (contains no staining artificial colors). Bottle.....50c
- Lash-Life Beautifies the eyes. Tube.....50c
- Antiseptic and Astringent—Very effective. Bottle.....50c
- Face Powder—Guaranteed not to grow hair. Fine shades. Box.....\$1.00

ZIP is easily applied at home, pleasantly fragrant, quick, effective, painless and absolutely harmless. It leaves the skin soft and smooth.

*Not only removes hair—  
but checks its future growth.*

Ladies everywhere are now using ZIP for destroying superfluous hair on the face, under arms, limbs and body. Guaranteed on a permanent basis.

Avoid imitations which stick to the surface. Leading Beauty Shops give ZIP a trial. Not be deceived. See that the word ZIP is on the preparation used for your treatment.

Write for FREE BOOK explaining the benefits of ZIP for the removal of superfluous hair, or when in New York call at my salon to have FREE DEMONSTRATION.

ALL GOOD STORES or By Mail.

*Madame Berthé*

Dept. 408  
562 Fifth Avenue  
Ent. on 46th St.  
New York City

Madame Berthé, Specialist  
Dept. 408  
562 Fifth Ave., N. Y. C.

Please send me FREE BOOK "Beauty's Greatest Secret" explaining the three types of superfluous hair, and in which leading actresses tell how to be beautiful. Also a FREE sample of your Massage and Cleansing Cream, guaranteed not to grow hair.

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME.)

Ask At Your Toilet Goods Counter

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